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Methodist Episcopal Sunday School

Steph. Franklin,
Pastor.

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THE LIFE
OF
MARTIN LUTHER.

REVISED BY THE EDITORS.

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LIFE
OF
MARTIN LUTHER.

THE Reformation of religion, which under Providence, was effected by Dr. Martin Luther, is justly entitled to be considered as one of the most important and interesting events recorded in the page of history. The consequences, which it produced throughout the civilized world, can hardly be appreciated, as its influence extended not only to the improvement of our views respecting the doctrines of Christianity, but also materially contributed to the dissemination of more just and enlarged sentiments respecting the nature and foundation of civil liberty.

The apparent inadequacy of the means to the accomplishment of such vast ends cannot fail to strike the mind of every reflecting person. That an obscure individual, without personal advantages or mental endowments, which indicated any decided superiority above many of his fellows, and destitute of the patronage of the great, should have brought about so widely extended a revolution, is truly astonishing. That he should have overturned the most compact and firmly established hierarchy in some of the most powerful European nations, and shaken to its centre the Romish Church, natu-

rally suggests a variety of serious reflections. They lead our thoughts to the overruling hand of God, who, by the weakest instruments, often causes the most important events to come to pass.

Martin Luther was born at Aisleben, an obscure village in the county of Mansfield, Saxony, on the 10th of November, in the year 1483. His parents were John Luther and Margaret Lindeman. His father was distinguished through life for industry and sobriety ; and long after Luther had attracted public attention, his grateful son dedicated a book to him. His mother was exemplary in her conduct, and took great pleasure in teaching him the first principles of religion and morality. Our Reformer always looked back, with feelings of the most lively gratitude, to the care that was thus bestowed upon him at a very tender age, the effects of which remained through the whole course of his life.

It is impossible now to ascertain at what age Luther was sent to school. He was placed under the care of George Omilius, at Aisleben. In that dark age the means of obtaining instruction were very limited. Many schools, however, especially those taught by friars of the order of St. Augustin, still continued the practice of communicating some religious instruction to their pupils. At the age of fourteen he was sent to Magdeburg, but remained here only one year. The Franciscans had founded a school at Issenach, which was in high reputa-

tion in that part of Germany : this induced a great many scholars to repair thither.

Luther remained at this school four years. His ardour and application to his studies were indefatigable, and his proficiency was what might be expected from the union of such labour and such talents, under the direction of so able a master. He excelled all his school-fellows in the proficiency he had made in Greek and Roman literature ; the exercises which were prescribed were written with greater facility and accuracy.

The habits and talents of Trebonius were much calculated to render him a popular schoolmaster. He showed the greatest attention and respect to his pupils. When he entered the school he always took off his hat, a custom which, we are told, his colleagues did not observe ; and when any stranger was present he used to say, "That this was no ordinary place, for he had no doubt that those who hereafter should become the leading men of the state were present ; although we cannot distinguish them, let us honour them."

The principal reason of Luther's repairing to Issenach, was in consequence of his mother having some relations in that neighbourhood who were in good circumstances. Be that as it may, we have the authority of Luther himself, that, when at school, he, like other poor boys, supported himself by begging his food. This, it may be observed, was no uncommon case in those days, even by those who were under no

necessity of doing so ; it was rather reckoned honourable, because it showed a proof of humility.

After having laid a good foundation for the farther cultivation of classical learning, he repaired to the university of Erfurt in the end of 1501, or beginning of 1502.

He was created master of arts in 1503. Having now arrived at his twentieth year, his relations esteemed it high time that he should make choice of a profession. Being elated with the figure he had made at the university, and the reputation he had there acquired, they urged him to study law, imagining that this was the most likely way to obtain both honours and wealth. To please them he began to study law, but soon relinquished the task. It is probable that it was with reluctance he proposed to follow the profession of law, but an event of a very affecting nature induced him immediately to abandon it.

There was a young man of the name of Alexius, with whom he was united by the closest ties of friendship. In an excursion to the country, they were overtaken by a thunder-storm, and Alexius was struck dead by the side of Luther, who was unhurt. Sudden death, by what circumstances soever accompanied, naturally excites sympathy ; but to one of Luther's character, and in his peculiar situation at this time, every thing contributed to excite the strongest emotions. He was more forcibly impressed than he had ever been before with the

uncertainty and vanity of all terrestrial enjoyments ;—he therefore determined to consecrate his time and talents to devout meditation, and to live sequestered from the world and its temptations. He vowed on the spot, that if God were pleased to deliver him from his present perilous situation, he would enter into a monastery, and dedicate his powers, both of body and mind, to the service of God. He seems to have considered this alarming incident as an express intimation from the Almighty to become a monk. As he was remarkable for showing respect to his parents, he took an early opportunity of informing them of his resolution. They were of a very different opinion, attempted to dissuade him from entering on a monastic life, and even warned him not to be deluded by the devil. Luther, however, determined to fulfil his vow ; and accordingly, in the year 1505, became a member of the Augustin monastery at Erfurt.

Luther's sentiments respecting some of the leading doctrines of the gospel were formed before he had an opportunity of deriving, or even of comparing them with divine revelation : for he had not as yet seen a copy of the Scriptures.

Luther was of a very social disposition, and much beloved by his numerous acquaintance. He had become a monk without having communicated his intention to any one. Previous, however, to entering the monastery, he assembled his friends at his lodgings, and desired them to enjoy themselves this last time, as a

final interruption was about to take place to the agreeable intercourse he was accustomed to have with them. He was about to engage in a monastic life. This intimation confounded them, as he was remarkable for the gaiety of his temper and the playfulness of his humour.

He was a lively and interesting companion, to whom no one could be indifferent ; possessed an admirable ear for music, of which he was passionately fond ; he had a good voice—performed upon several instruments—and occasionally amused himself in composing music. Tradition has ascribed to him what is commonly called the “Old Hundredth Psalm tune.” His judgment, in regard to musical composition, was relied on by his friends, who frequently submitted to his correction what they had composed. Indeed, through life, he indulged to a certain degree his passion for music. When his views of divine truth became more clear and consistent, he confined himself to the cultivation of sacred music ; and at a late period of life he was accustomed to sing a hymn after supper with his family and visitors. Notwithstanding that he naturally possessed a great flow of spirits, what not unfrequently happens to persons of that temper, he was subject to melancholy, from which he was generally relieved by music. From a letter written by him to Linocius, in which he jests upon the subject, we learn that, for the sake of exercise, he amused himself by practising the art of a turner.

Luther was constitutionally of a very ardent

disposition, and had no idea of only executing imperfectly whatever he attempted. The zeal for his order was so immoderate, that he wished to be called Augustin instead of Martin. He sent to his father the ring which he received upon being created master of arts. Upon assuming the peculiar garb of an Augustinian or Black-friar, he also sent to him the clothes he had been accustomed to wear ; and, as the cultivation of literature was esteemed a reproach by his ignorant associates, the works of no author being studied except those of Augustin, he left all his books behind him except Plautus and Virgil, two very singular exceptions.

It has been already mentioned that he had been subject to occasional fits of melancholy ; but from the time he became a monk, it was habitual, and for which he could find no remedy. He had as yet no knowledge of those gospel truths which could alone relieve one in his situation, and found that the most rigid observance of the rules of his order were of no avail. No one in the convent adhered more strictly and conscientiously to the severe discipline that was enjoined ; to the exercise of reading, disputing, fasting, and prayer. His mental distress, nevertheless, was so great, that he felt himself under the necessity of making his case known to Staupitz, the head of his order, who recommended submission, and told him that such trials might turn out for his good, and is reported to have assigned this reason, “because

God was to make use of him for the accomplishment of great ends.”*

The chief reason that induced Luther to become a member of this fraternity was the false notion that, by so doing, neither his devotions nor studies would suffer any interruption, and that he should have it in his power to devote his whole time to religious services. This, indeed, was the representation given by the initiated themselves; but the real state of the case was very different, and this Luther found by experience. He was at first harshly treated by the monks, and was compelled to perform the most disagreeable offices. He sometimes discharged the duty of porter. The performance of these menial duties within doors did not disgust him so much as being sent through the town to beg assistance for the monastery. He was very dissatisfied at being employed in such avocations. He prevailed upon the university of Erfurt, where he had been educated, and whose members still had a high esteem for him, to intercede in his favour. This they accordingly did, and he was freed from those ignoble services. John Staupitz also, provincial of the order, whose business it was to visit the monastery, and, at the same time, a great friend to Luther, recommended it to the Prior to treat Luther with more kindness, as he was a master of arts and fond of learning.

He was ordained upon Sabbath, 2d May,

* Seckend. p. 19.

1507, and on the same day performed mass. About the same time one of the most important events happened which ever occurred during the whole course of his life, and to which his subsequent splendid career may be ascribed as to its cause. He accidentally found a Latin Bible in the library belonging to the convent. Though he had resided two years in the monastery, yet so little value was attached to it, that it had never attracted his own attention nor that of any of his brethren. When he examined its contents, he was perfectly confounded. He had received as liberal an education as his country could afford. So great was his ignorance, however, that he did not know that the whole of Scripture was not read to the people. He now saw that by far the greatest part of the Scripture was not read. It is probable that all the acquaintance he had with the Word of God was derived from the breviary ; his surprise, therefore, may be more easily conceived than described.

It was Luther who first saw, and clearly pointed out, upon what foundation all religious truth is placed, as well as showed the necessity of carefully studying what was contained in the Bible. In the language of Chillingwörth, it was he who first proclaimed this inestimable truth—"The Bible, the Bible is the religion of Protestants."

He had only access to the Latin Vulgate ; but imperfect as his sources of information were, he made the best use of them he could.

He devoured with avidity the sacred volume, and though he had no opportunity of deriving assistance from the labours of others, it is astonishing what progress he made. His perseverance was indefatigable; and we are informed by Melancthon, his bosom friend, that not unfrequently he would spend a whole day in meditating upon a passage he did not understand, or which he believed to contain a revelation of some of the most important truths of the gospel.

His former melancholy again returned with tenfold vengeance. When he meditated upon the wrath of God, says Melancthon, so strong were his impressions, that he was frequently near fainting. I have often seen him, when discoursing upon that subject, lie down on his bed, and repeat again and again these words, "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin." (Gal. iii. 22.) In such situations, he always had recourse to prayer. So great was his application to the study of the Scriptures at this time, that his health was materially injured. For seven successive days he sometimes paid no regard to the hours appointed for service by the canons in the monastery. The monks performed this duty in rotation, and Luther never neglected to officiate, when, in the regular course, he was called upon to do so. If at any time he was prevented by ill health from attending church, though confined to his bed-chamber, yet so conscientious was he, that he recited the service which the rules of his or-

der prescribed, and, according to the regulations of the Roman liturgy, always celebrated mass fasting.

He seems to have formed at a very early period an attachment to preaching. He had no particular charge or church himself, but that his talent might not be laid up in a napkin, and that his active mind might receive some exercise, he frequently visited clergymen who resided in the neighbouring villages, and preached for them.

About this time his sentiments respecting Christian doctrine began to be enlarged. In particular, he was taught by an old monk that justification was obtained only by the grace of God. This doctrine connects, and is connected, with the whole of revelation. We are not told who this monk was, nor where he had acquired his knowledge. But it ought to be observed, that even in that dark age, there were several who inculcated the same truth. Savonarola, a Dominican, was burned at Florence in 1498, for his steady adherence to this doctrine.

Frederick, Elector of Saxony, commonly called *The Wise*, was too sagacious not to perceive the numerous advantages that accompanied the cultivation of literature. The revival of learning had induced all wise princes to establish seminaries of learning in their dominions. Before that period, there were very few universities in Europe. It was speedily found, that in proportion as learning was disseminated, the

country became more prosperous. The Elector, therefore, resolved to confer the benefit of such an institution upon his principality. There were universities in other parts of his dominions ; but Wittemburg, the capital of Saxony, did not enjoy that advantage. In 1502, therefore, he founded a university there, and always showed an anxiety, that none should be appointed to professorships but men of distinguished abilities. Luther's fame had now spread very extensively, and, as has been already mentioned, Staupitz, who was always consulted by the Elector, entertained a high opinion of Luther's talents. By his means, Luther was translated to Wittemburg, and created professor of philosophy in 1508. He discharged the duties of his office with great applause, and taught with increasing reputation.

Though Luther had left the monastery at Erfurt, he notwithstanding still continued his connexion with the Augustinians. There were seven Augustinian convents in Saxony, subject to the direction of a Vicar General. Some dissension had taken place between this man and the friars. We are not informed whether it was Staupitz or not. The monks thought it necessary to refer the cause to the Pope, and that for this purpose one of their own order should undertake a journey to Rome. So great was Luther's influence among his brethren, that in 1510, they pitched upon him as a fit person to execute the mission. He had never been at Rome, and besides, his anxiety to pro-

mote the interests of his order, he was very desirous of visiting the holy city. Having seen little of the world, and never having had an opportunity of receiving a correct account of the state of religion there, he innocently imagined, (for at this time he believed all the absurdities of Popery,) that in a city blessed with the presence of Christ's vicar on earth, the utmost regularity of conduct, and the practice of every Christian virtue, as well as the most unfeigned regard to the ordinances of the Church, would prevail. He had not the most distant idea of the licentiousness and debauchery that had infected all ranks. When he saw the real state of the case, he was exceedingly shocked. The following is a translation of Luther's own account of it.

"I saw," said he, "the Pope and the Pope's court, and had an opportunity of observing the morals of the Roman clergy.—There I celebrated mass, and saw others celebrate it, but with such indecency, that as often as I think of it I am immoderately shocked. Among other things, I have seen courtezans, at the very altar, behave in the most irreverent manner, acting improperly, and laughing. I have heard some repeat these words, over the bread and the wine on the altar, 'Thou art bread and thou shalt remain bread—thou art wine, and thou shalt remain wine.' " Such indecent behaviour could not fail to disgust every one of ordinary moral feeling, especially when uttered by priests who professed to believe in the real

presence. When he performed divine service with the utmost devotion, the Italian clergy laughed at him—and they themselves celebrated mass so rapidly, that before Luther had come to the **GOSPEL**, (that is, to that part of the service so called, and which Luther read at the time the priest was engaged,) the service was concluded; he then exclaimed, “Holy Father, Holy Father, dismiss, dismiss.”

Luther lived to publish only the first volume of his own works, in the preface to which he informs us, that he not only visited the common churches, but even those below ground, called *Crypta*, or concealed. In the same preface, he candidly confesses the strong attachment he had to the superstitions of the Church of Rome. His words are—“I wish the reader to peruse my works with much pity and commiseration, as I was once a monk, and a most frantic Papist, ready to put to death all who opposed the Papacy, or expressed one word against the Pope. In defending the Papacy I was not ice and coldness itself, like Eckius and others.” The pious Christian can hardly fail to admire the goodness of Divine Providence, in affording our Reformer an opportunity of personally visiting the seat of the beast and the false prophet. It opened his eyes more effectually to discover the corruptions of the hierarchy, and the necessity of reformation, than any thing else could have done. It was an excellent preparative for the work he was afterwards called upon to engage in. He hun-

self viewed it in this light, and when conversing with his friends, was wont to say, "that he would not exchange it for one thousand florins." It disgusted him at the clergy, and it was not a violent transition to look upon the ceremonies of the Church with less reverence. His mind was to a certain degree unhinged. A considerable number of years elapsed, however, before he escaped from these trammels.

All his biographers mention, that his progress in Scripture knowledge was so evident to his friends, and his study of the Bible so unwearied, that they agreed he would produce some change in the religious world. Such an occupation was in those days a complete novelty, and gave him a decided superiority over every one with whom he had to contend.—"This kind of knowledge was so rare," says Mosheim, "that when Luther arose, there could not be found, even in the university of Paris, which was considered as the first and most famous of all the public schools of learning, a single person qualified to dispute with him, or oppose his doctrine, upon a Scripture foundation."*

He had executed his commission at Rome with such address, that he not only received the thanks of the Augustinians, but at their urgent solicitation he was prevailed on to take the degree of Doctor in Divinity. This he did upon the festival of St. Luke, (18th October,) though he wished to decline it. The necessary ex-

* Vol. III. p. 298.

pense was defrayed by the Elector of Saxony, a singular proof how highly he was respected by that prince ; and it may be added, how distinguished a figure he had made as a public professor. His being promoted to this degree did not elate him with self-conceit, as sometimes happens. He considered it as an additional reason for studying the Scriptures more zealously.

During the course of the same year in which he took his degree of doctor in divinity, (1512,) he was preferred to a chair much more congenial to his wishes. He was appointed professor of divinity in the same university. The elector frequently heard him preach, and greatly admired his pulpit talents.

Luther came better prepared to discharge the duties of the professorship of divinity than most of his contemporaries. The study of divinity was fully in as bad a state as philosophy. They were both polluted by the same means. The plain doctrines and precepts of the Bible were completely concealed by the jargon of what was called logic. The streams of the sanctuary were deserted ; hardly any one was acquainted with the Scripture, or was aware of the inestimable treasure it contained. The theological lectures at that time consisted of nothing else than doctrines, which had very little tendency to benefit mankind.

We are told, that about this time he studied with the most unremitting application the Hebrew and Greek languages, being thoroughly

persuaded of the necessity of an acquaintance with the Scriptures in the originals, in order to obtain correct sentiments respecting the doctrines of the gospel.

We have now reached that part of the history of Luther's life, when, from being comparatively in an obscure situation, he suddenly arrested the attention of all Europe, and laid the foundation of a revolution which caused the immense fabric of the Popish hierarchy to totter, and established in a considerable number of the European states in the course of time, the principles of political liberty, religious toleration, and, what was of much more importance, just views respecting the gospel of the grace of God.

It must be confessed, that, great as Luther's share of merit undoubtedly was, in accomplishing the glorious Reformation, there were, under an overruling Providence, circumstances in the political, literary, and religious state of Europe at that time, which seconded his efforts in a very powerful manner.

The Church of Rome had long degenerated from that pure and simple institution prescribed by Christ and his Apostles. To that kingdom which its Master said was not of this world, the votaries of that Church had the presumption to ascribe power and secular jurisdiction of the most ample kind. Not satisfied with thus engrossing the just rights of mankind, they succeeded in keeping princes who governed the most extensive empires, under the most odious

restraints, and installed or dethroned them as they judged proper. From small beginnings, the bishops of Rome, merely taking advantage of that city having been for ages the mistress of the world, had the address to impose the most abject servitude on the inhabitants of Europe. As this system of tyranny advanced, its demands increased in a tenfold proportion. Unlike other forms of government which confine their control to the external actions of men, they disdained such limits, and with a degree of arrogance, which nothing but the certainty of the fact could render credible, they presumed to set bounds to human thought, and to lay claim to what belongs to God alone. Knowledge, or the improvement of our reasoning faculty, was considered as a most formidable foe: and, both in theory and practice, their favourite motto was, "that ignorance was the mother of devotion." The members of the Romish communion were not permitted to exercise their judgment upon the most common and harmless topics, and were called upon to resign that invaluable privilege into the hands of what was called the Church, (that is, the Pope,) who of course was infallible. Those who ventured on forbidden ground, and despised the ignoble trammels in which the nations were held, paid dearly for their rashness. All the vengeance which the most confirmed despotism could command was poured upon them; and as if the punishment of death, in its most savage and cruel shapes, were insufficient to gratify the

unrelenting ferocity of these monsters, they pretended to consign the victims to everlasting damnation.

But these denunciations were insufficient to restrain the natural activity of the human mind, and to thwart the purposes of the Almighty. In the darkest and most dreary period of the reign of ignorance and despotism, individuals had the hardihood to assert their rights, and to seal them with their blood. The ashes of Huss and Jerome, of the Waldenses and Albigenses, were the seed of the Church ; and persecution, instead of confirming, was one great cause of the overthrow of Papal authority.

There were many good men in the bosom of the Church, who inherited the sentiments of these martyrs before Luther appeared, who were anxiously waiting for a favourable opportunity to declare themselves, but from various causes were not able or had not the courage to stem the torrent. At the Reformation these joined Luther, and made a considerable accession to the number of his followers.

The Romish Church could not be considered as pure at any period of its history ; but the corruptions which had been accumulating for ages, had, long before the appearance of Luther, awakened the attention of considerate and pious men. It has always been a maxim of that Church to remove nothing that has been once established. Being infallible, and consequently perfect, reformation is precluded. The most vigorous resistance has always been

made to every one who proposed a reform. Yet this did not prevent those who wished well to the interests of religion from declaring what they conceived was necessary to be done. A desire for the correction of abuses and corruptions was not confined to a few private persons. The most powerful sovereigns joined in exclaiming against them. Louis the twelfth of France used to call the Church, Babylon—applied to it the description which the Apostle John gives to the Mother of Harlots, and said that she ought to be destroyed. Long before this time, when two Popes asserted their title to the chair of St. Peter, the Council of Pisa was called, (25th March, 1409,) to reform the Church in its head and in its members. About a century after the meeting of that council, (1st November, 1503,) on the death of Pope Alexander VI. the cardinals, before the election of Julius II. swore, and made Julius swear, that a General Council should assemble within the space of two years for the reformation of the Church. When the members of the conclave so solemnly expressed their opinion of the corrupted state of the Church, it must have arrived at a great height indeed. Their endeavours were nevertheless abortive.

The Pope had for ages been regarded as one who had authority to censure or applaud the conduct of all men, whilst he himself was amenable to none. Favoured by the ignorance of the times, and placed on such an elevation, it is not surprising that persons so perfectly free

from restraint, and from those ordinary checks which render it politic for vicious men to assume the garb of virtue, should discover in their conduct immoralities of the grossest kind. The profligacy of the court of Rome had arrived at a great height. Every species of debauchery was practised there, which the evil passions of men could invent. For a considerable time this was carefully concealed from the multitude. It was well known to a few, but it was their interest to prevent it from being made public. Among those who were invested with the office of Pope, were the most detestable characters, whose vices excited universal disgust. Instead of paying any regard to the laws of religion or morality, they set them at open defiance. The Council of Pisa declared the two contending Popes, Benedict XIII. and Gregory XII. guilty of heresy, perjury, contumacy, unworthy of the smallest honour or respect, and separated from the communion of the Church. The vices of Borgia were of the most shocking kind. Julius II. had disgusted the warmest friends of the hierarchy by his unprincipled ambition, and the means he took to accomplish his ends. Even Leo X. was known to indulge in gross sensuality. Men of discernment had already perceived whither matters were tending. Even the common people held the vices of the Popes in detestation. They were led to do so in a greater degree, from the rapacious avarice they showed on all occasions, and the prodigal man-

ner in which they squandered their revenues. Thus public opinion favoured Luther extremely.

The example of the Popes was zealously followed by the clergy of all ranks. They rioted in luxury; and, though they pretended to live sequestered from the world and to lead a life of poverty and indigence, were in reality the most dissipated of men. They held all liberal knowledge in contempt, the only object of their ambition being the gratification of their lusts. Before the time of Luther, complaints were not so frequent against errors in faith or opinion, as against the abuse of power and avarice of the clergy.

The doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope also began to be called in question. The better informed part of the German, French, Flemish, and British Churches, held that he was not infallible; and the proceedings of the Council of Constance and Basil contributed to confirm them in their opinion. This scepticism had taken its rise in the university of Paris, and was propagated with great zeal by its members.

Whenever reformation had been proposed, it was always resisted by the supreme authority which the Popes possessed; and as long as that jurisdiction lasted, no progress could be made in the work. This, which they considered as their prerogative, derived immediately from God, they studied carefully to preserve as their most invaluable inheritance. So indecently and infamously did the holy father

sometimes act, that in 1468, Oneas Sylvius, known by the name of Pius II., without the least shame, publicly declared, "that as Sylvius, he was a damnable heretic, because he had proposed a reform, but as Pius he was an orthodox Pontiff." The presumptuous claims of the Pope only needed to be examined to be set aside, and as they rested merely on opinion, in proportion as the minds of men became enlightened, and the perfection of the Scriptures recognised as alone able to make wise unto salvation, the absurdity of the pretension was manifested. When the Reformation commenced, this stumbling-block was in some measure removed out of the way.

Among the other circumstances which essentially contributed to Luther's success, must be mentioned the revival of learning in Europe. The ignorance which pervaded all Europe was excessive in what has emphatically been called the dark ages. The precious monuments of the genius of Greece and Rome had been long concealed from public view; and very few of those who were esteemed learned, had at that time any knowledge of, or taste for, classical literature. When Constantinople was taken by the Turks, several illustrious men, who had successfully cultivated elegant learning, found it necessary to emigrate; and Italy, the very seat of the Patriarch of the Romish Church, was their chosen residence. The impression that they made was astonishing. Learning, and learned men, were protected at

the courts of princes, and those who were incapable of being actuated by any superior motive were vain of the favour they afforded. Pope Leo X. (whose father had borne so illustrious a part in protecting men of genius) was, when he arrived at his elevation, anxious to extend his patronage to the same cause, that the reputation of the family of Medici might not be diminished during his pontificate. Though hostile to the Reformation, as a true son of the Church, unconscious to himself, he was busily employed in cutting the sinews of his own power, and furnishing fuel, which was very soon to be kindled into a flame, of which he was to be one of the first victims.

The benefit of possessing the inestimable treasure of the Scriptures was in a short time not confined to the learned. They were translated into almost all the languages of Europe. A short time before this period, the art of printing had been brought to perfection, an art the most auspicious to the progress of reason, and consequently to the advancement of divine knowledge, which was ever invented. Innumerable copies of the sacred books were dispersed in every direction, could be procured at small expense, and proclaimed to the multitude, who received them with avidity, "the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God." The whole of Europe was ready to receive with gladness a Reformation. The address, however, and artful policy of the Court of Rome, had hitherto prevented

its taking place ; but the period was now come, when even the formidable opposition of that powerful body could not stop its progress. In short, every thing portended that a new state of things was about to begin. The streams flowing from so many quarters, had assumed one direction, and only required a skilful hand to collect them into one channel, to form a mighty river which nothing could withstand. This was done by Luther, and the current, since his time, has been rapidly increasing.

The political state of Europe had a natural tendency to favour the Reformation. The most powerful princes, Charles V., Francis I., and Henry VIII., were in the prime of life. They at first attempted to strangle it in the birth ; yet in consequence of the jealousy that existed among them, though in some respects they retarded, they ultimately promoted its success.

Germany was certainly the fittest country in the world for the Reformation to begin at the time it did, and Saxony the best adapted for that end of all the Germanic principalities. Charles V., and Francis I., upon the death of Maximilian, were candidates for the imperial crown. The electors, afraid to throw so much power into the hands of either, seeing they each possessed so much already, offered it to Frederick, Elector of Saxony, generally called "The Wise." This prince, with a degree of magnanimity seldom exercised, declined the high honour. By favouring Charles, however, he was elected. Charles stood in great awe of the

Elector, and whether from gratitude, or being intent on what he conceived to be more important concerns, did not employ violent measures against Luther, who was in a manner protected by Frederick.

In 1514 and 1515, briefs* were expedited for the sale of "indulgences;" but this infamous commerce did not commence till 1516. Upon paying a certain sum of money to the Papal See, according to a fixed table of rates, it was pretended any sin whatever was forgiven. A similar traffic had existed from a very early period, but the year 1100, at least such as indulgences were at the time of the Reformation, is generally considered as the date of their commencement, when they were invented by Pope Urban II. in order to procure money to carry on a war against the Turks, that possession of the Holy Land might be obtained.

When Luther attacked indulgences, the Popes had been accustomed to trade in their sale for upwards of 400 years. Leo X., then in the pontifical chair, in consequence of his prodigality, found it necessary to devise some means to increase his revenue. Possessed of some well-grounded pretensions to an acquaintance with polite literature, he was not only ignorant of divinity, but affected to despise all studies of that kind. Of a plethoric habit, fond of ease and of pleasures, which from his sta-

* A name given to official letters of the Romish Church.

tion have been called refined, but which the impartiality of history must denominate of the basest kind, he paid little attention to business. It is of the nature of all corruptions to become worse and worse. Accordingly, Leo's indulgences included the dead as well as the living ; they delivered from purgatory. Those who collected the money that was paid for them were called *Questors*. The Archbishop of Mentz and Magdeburg had the commission for this purpose in Saxony, who employed as his deputy one John Tetzel, a Dominican. A more profligate agent could not have been selected. He had been condemned to death for his crimes, but, in consequence of the intercession of the Elector Frederick, he was pardoned. This man's presumption gave offence to every one. He pretended to give absolution not only for past, but future sins of every description, and set no bounds to his impudence. Had Tetzel been more temperate in publishing the Pope's bull,* there is little doubt (according to Luther's own account in 1541) that our Reformer's energies would not have been excited at the precise time when this important event took place. He candidly confessed that he knew very little of the nature of indulgences, was disposed to submit to the authority of the Church, and that it was rather Tetzel's *manner* of publishing them that first created disgust in

* The decree of the Pope is called a "Bull."

his mind. He imagined that the Pope would approve of his opposition to them.

Tetzel was violently incensed against Luther, and, like a true inquisitor, threatened to put him to death; and, to terrify him into obedience, sometimes caused a funeral pile to be erected in the market-place. But all those means were insufficient to extinguish that spark of light which Luther had kindled. He defended his opinions with an intrepidity which never deserted him. Finding it useless to reason with Tetzel, he sent a letter to Albert, Archbishop of Mentz, in which he reprobated in strong terms Tetzel's mode of procedure, and urged his diocesan to interpose his authority. No notice, however, was taken of this.

Towards the end of October, 1517, he published ninety-five propositions, in which he copiously treated of indulgences, purgatory, &c., and invited any one publicly to dispute with him; and, at the same time, requested those who could not attend to send their observations in writing. No one either appeared or sent any remarks.

Tetzel, whatever other quality he might possess, was not deficient in zeal. He also published two *theses* at Frankfort, in Brandenburg. His name is affixed to them, though they are generally ascribed to Conradus Wimpina, professor of divinity at Frankfort. The first thesis consisted of one hundred and six positions; the second of fifty. The whole influence of the Church was exerted in favour of Tetzel. No

fewer than three hundred monks were present at the first disputation. The arguments, if they may be so called, were derived from the antiquity of the institution, the authority of the Church, and the authority of the scholastic doctors. Those of Luther were drawn from reason and Scripture.

Tetzel, enraged at the obstinacy of the heretic, and his opposition to Papal power, determined to treat Luther's books as he would have treated his person had it been in his power. He publicly threw them into the fire. This strange mode of argument was speedily retaliated on poor Tetzel by the students of the University at Wittemburg. Luther was the chief ornament of that seminary, had greatly increased its fame, and was beloved by all its members. Without Luther's knowledge they assembled in the market-place, and having there kindled a fire, they burned nearly eight hundred of Tetzel's theses. This mark of attachment to their master was not, however, approved by him. He thought that it would both injure the cause, and endanger his own safety. It was a clear proof, nevertheless, that his pupils had imbibed his sentiments respecting the subjects in debate.

Luther was at first satisfied with speaking against new abuses only; but he afterwards began to study the origin and foundation of indulgences, and passing from the new to the ancient, from the building to the foundation, he perceived the iniquity of the traffic. So timid was he at

first, and so little design had he in his opposition, that he promised to be silent, provided the abettors of indulgences would do the same. Their not acceding to this moderate proposal was fatal to their cause. His diligence and ingenuity were roused. He was not only instigated by a love to truth, but from motives of self-defence he entered keenly into the dispute ; and in proportion as his inquiries advanced, he perceived the fallacy of the arguments upon which they were pretended to be founded.

Unexpectedly to Luther, his writings were well received, and this gave him encouragement in his investigations. Disposed to behave respectfully to his superiors, he, in 1518, submitted what he had written to the Bishop of Brandenburg, whose name was Jerome Sculetus, and requested him, if he was offended at any thing contained in his writings, to blot it out, or even to burn the whole. This requisition was accompanied with a commentary on his propositions. Luther, in the letter he addressed to him, took the greatest pains to assure him that he was only a seeker after truth ; that he was anxious not to affirm any thing dogmatically.

As he had shown the most dutiful respect to his Bishop, so he determined to exhibit equal submission to Staupitz, who had patronised him at an early period, and to whom he was indebted for the situation he now held. Fifteen days, therefore, after he had written to the Bishop, he enclosed the same resolutions in a letter to Staupitz, and requested him to transmit them

to the Pope, that the malevolent misrepresentations of his enemies might be obviated. He expressed great anxiety that Staupitz would not expose himself to danger on his account, and added, that he wished to be alone responsible for his own opinions. The conclusion of this letter is very remarkable ;—“ To those of my friends who would alarm me for the consequences, I have nothing else to say than what Reuchlin said ; ‘ He who is poor has nothing to fear, he can lose nothing.’ I possess no property, neither do I desire any. There remains to me only a frail body, harassed by continual illness, and if they take away my life by open violence or stratagem, they make me but little poorer. I am satisfied with my Redeemer and Propitiation, the Lord Jesus Christ, whom I shall praise as long as I exist. If any one be unwilling to join with me in these praises, what is that to me ? Let him raise his voice after his own fashion. The Lord Jesus will save me for ever.”

Luther had not only to defend himself from the attacks of those who were bigoted admirers of the Church, and of Papal authority, but he learned about this time that some of his own brethren, the Augustinians, were hostile to his opinions. He determined, therefore, to seize the first opportunity that offered of vindicating himself. This presented itself in the month of May, 1518. Accordingly, he disputed publicly at Heidelberg with M. Laurentius Beyerus, a monk of his own order. There was a general

assembly of Augustinians held in that city at that time. Luther's opinions and habits were then so monastic, that he went thither on foot to show his contrition. The Elector of Saxony gave him a letter of introduction to the Prince Palatine, which is supposed to have been intended to operate as a safe-conduct, or to protect him both on his journey, and during his residence at Heidelberg. He was treated with great kindness by Laurentius, bishop of Wurtzburg, who favoured Luther's endeavours at reformation, but died soon afterwards. The principal subject of discussion was "Justification by Faith." The *paradoxes* as they were called (or assertions contrary to appearance) amounted to forty; twelve related to philosophy, and twenty-eight to divinity. Though Luther and Beyerus sustained the principal parts in the disputation, yet a great many others engaged in it. The most distinguished of those was Martin Bucer, who afterwards became one of the most eminent champions of the Reformation. He took notes of what passed, and represents Luther as having acquitted himself with great ability as well as gentleness in defending the paradoxes.

In the month of June, 1518, he thought proper to address a letter to the Pope. In it he professes the most profound respect and submission to Papal authority, and speaks in modest terms of his own acquirements—vindicates his having held public disputation—and claims the right of doing so, in consequence of his be-

ing a doctor in divinity. He also points out how improbable it is that so illustrious a prince as Frederick would protect a man of depraved morals, as he was represented to be, or suffer him to remain in his own university. The conclusion of the letter is very singular. "He prostrates himself at Leo's feet with all he is, and has ; begs him to give the command of life or death—approbation or disapprobation ; acknowledges the Pope's voice to be the voice of Christ speaking in his Holiness ; and that if he deserved death, he would not refuse to die. The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." No one acquainted with Luther's character can doubt of the sincerity of these declarations. At this time he believed in the infallibility of the Pope, retained the doctrine of purgatory, and railed against the Pichards and the Bohemians who rejected it.

Upon his return from Heidelberg he immediately set about composing an explanation of the propositions he had sent to the Pope. All the Wittemberg doctors had embraced his opinions, and the whole university had followed their example excepting one licentiate, Sebastian. His friends expressed a great desire that the explanation should be printed. To this he at last consented. It was sent to press about the end of August, and printed in an office which belonged to the Elector Frederick.

Luther, as has been repeatedly mentioned, arrived at the knowledge of divine truth by slow degrees ; but, by the blessing of God, he at last

came to the glorious conclusion, so dear to every genuine disciple of the Lord Jesus, on which his future progress in accomplishing the Reformation depended, and is the foundation-stone of the Protestant temple, "That Scripture alone is the test of divine truth." The doctors of the Romish Church were greatly alarmed at the progress of what was termed *heresy*, and were not afraid to enter the lists with our intrepid Reformer. John Eckius, a Dominican, professor of divinity at Ingolstad, with whom Luther had lived in terms of the greatest friendship, was his first opponent. Possessed of all the scholastic knowledge of the times, and having acquired a considerable reputation, he risked his character and opposed Luther. He wrote a book entitled *Obelisci*, Obelisks, (an obelisk among printers is this mark †,) and made use of the common arguments. Luther, in a pamphlet called *Asterisci*, Asterisks (this mark *,) so far from being dismayed by such an antagonist, replied with a confidence peculiar to himself, and showed that Eckius neither understood Scripture nor the fathers. It is true, Eckius declared that the book had been sent to press without his knowledge, being ashamed of the performance. The futility of the arguments of so celebrated a doctor, added new laurels to the Lutheran cause, and made those favour it who had been very hostile to its progress.

Luther's writings, as has been mentioned, were transmitted to Rome. The controversy had hitherto been chiefly confined to Germa-

ny ; but upon the arrival of his books at Rome, the abettors of the Holy See awoke from their lethargy, caught the alarm, and a reply was attempted by Sylvester a Prierio, a Dominican, and master of the Pope's palace. It is almost impossible to imagine any thing more contemptible than this answer. He pretended not to know who Luther was ; and so confident was he of success, that he vainly boasts he had composed it in *three* days ; an assertion which no one who looks at it will be disposed to call in question. It consists of a tissue of assertions respecting the very worst and most absurd tenets of Popery ; and adducing, in confirmation of his assertions, the authority of Thomas Aquinas. Luther replied, and informed him that his answer was the result of only *two* days' labour, and with a very unsparing hand lashes Prierio, holds up to ridicule his arguments, and warns him if he be disposed to enter the lists again, he had need to look for better arms, otherwise he would treat *him* and *his* Thomas very roughly. Sylvester replied, which made Luther lose all patience. If his former animadversions were severe, those contained in his answer to this are ten times more so. The whole fraternity of Dominicans were now exasperated to an excessive degree against Luther. James Hoogstraat, an inquisitor, proposed a very summary method of getting quit of Luther—viz. instead of reasoning with him, to cut him off by fire and sword.

Inattentive as Leo had been to the cause of

Luther, he of a sudden awoke from his sleep. The Dominicans and the other advocates of Papal tyranny employed every argument they could invent to induce him to exert his power in suppressing the heresy. Before Leo had received the Emperor's letter, Luther was summoned to appear at Rome within sixty days. It is probable that this summons was presented to him upon the 7th of August. This measure, so unexpected on the part of Luther, excited considerable alarm in his breast. He had not to learn what those had to expect *at Rome* who opposed the decisions of a haughty and tyrannous priesthood, who, though disgraced by the grossest profligacy and sensuality, had the confidence to ascribe to the Pontiff the character of infallibility, and to appropriate to the head of their order the holy title of the Vicar of Christ.

Luther was at a loss what course to follow. He at last resolved to apply to Spalatin, who had always befriended him at the court of Frederick. He proposed two methods to evade the summons—either that the Elector should refuse him a *safe-conduct*, or not grant him permission to leave Wittemburg.

Meanwhile the Court of Rome did not relax its diligence. Exasperated against Luther, bent on his destruction, and vainly supposing that with him the cause of the Reformation would also die, Leo wrote to the legate at Augsburg, informed him what he had done, and gave instructions what line of conduct he was to

adopt till he should receive farther orders. It is impossible to read the intimation without the greatest detestation of the principles it contains, and at the same time feeling a secret pleasure, on reflecting that this ecclesiastical tyranny has been in a great measure destroyed. The most scurrilous language is applied to Luther and his cause. He is then informed that Luther was first to appear before him at Augsburg, and kept a prisoner until sent to Rome. If he recanted, he was to be received into the Church ; but if he did not, he and all that adhered to him were *excommunicated and accursed*.

The language of authority which Leo employed in this letter, it must be remembered, was only used when writing to a creature whom he himself had made, and who was ready to execute any commands he might receive from his master, whatever their nature or tendency might be, provided he could by so doing ingratiate himself with the Pope.

Upon the same day a letter was written to Frederick, but in a very different tone indeed. It is full of flattery, and no notice taken of excommunication if he did not deliver up Luther. Towards the conclusion, he stated in general terms that he had entrusted the business to Cajetan, and beseeched Frederick to assist him in compelling Luther to surrender to the legate. The low, dastardly, mean cunning, and inconsistency discovered in the whole of this correspondence, exhibits Leo and his advisers in a very contemptible light, and contains a tacit

acknowledgment on their part, that how violent soever their inclination might have been to usurp both ecclesiastical and secular power, this was not the season, nor Frederick the person, with whom such liberties were to be taken.

Frederick, however, who was better acquainted with the state of Germany, was fully persuaded, that the violence which might prove successful in Italy would only tend to exasperate Luther, and those who had espoused his cause. He entertained fears that every attempt at reconciliation would be frustrated. Though he wished the business in other hands, yet when he conversed with the legate at Augsburg, he seemed well enough satisfied that Luther should appear before him.

Whilst these transactions were going forward in Germany, the inveterate malice of Luther's enemies at the Court of Rome instigated the Pontiff to exert every nerve to overwhelm him in ruin. Application had been made to the Germanic ecclesiastical and secular authorities, to contribute their assistance in effecting this; but as Luther was an Augustinian monk, means were employed to render him hated by his superiors, that he might be an outlaw in the utmost latitude of the expression. For this purpose Leo wrote to Gabriel, grand vicar of the order, and urged him to prevent Luther from disseminating new doctrines in Germany, and not to proceed languidly in the business.

Very little was done in regard to Luther for about the space of a month. Neither party,

however, was idle. The Pope was busily engaged in devising means by which he might accomplish the destruction of the Reformer; whilst he, on the other hand, though he remained quiet at Wittemberg, discharging his public duty as a professor with fidelity and increasing reputation, did not permit any opportunity to escape that might be turned to his own advantage, or by which his safety might be preserved from Papal vengeance. Sensible of the strong hold he possessed in the affections of his colleagues, and of their willingness to render every assistance in their power, he applied to the university, and requested them, as a body, to mediate between the Pope and him. This was instantly complied with. They, however, judged it most expedient, in the first instance, to solicit the good offices of Charles Miltitz, a German, and chamberlain to the Pope. They entreated him to use his influence to obtain from Leo the favour of Luther being tried in Germany, by judges not liable to suspicion, and where he had security that his personal safety would not be violated. They praised his moral character. Upon the same day, 25th September, they wrote a letter to Leo, in which the same sentiments were expressed respecting Luther, and a similar request preferred.

This correspondence is exceedingly honourable both to the university and to Luther. In ordinary cases, the testimony of so respectable a body would have restrained the violence of any enemy who had a regard to his own cha-

racter ; but the Church of Rome has rejected with disdain such considerations, and made every thing subservient to the maintenance and increase of its own power. It is not surprising, then, that no answer was returned.

From whatever motive Frederick acted, he certainly acquitted himself as one who knew the tempers of men, and how to manage them, better than any of his contemporaries. After finishing the public business of the diet, he returned home, but not without previously giving assurances to the legate that Luther should appear at Augsburg, and obey the Papal summons. Like a cautious man, however, jealous as he was of the sincerity of Leo's professions, and those of his ministers, and whatever regard he might have to the preservation of Luther's life, he had not as yet spoken of, nor even hinted at, the propriety of giving him a safe-conduct. He began now to perceive the necessity of doing so. This very circumstance demonstrates in how critical a situation our Reformer was placed, how thick the clouds were gathering around him, and how narrowly his labours escaped being brought to a premature period. Luther was not insensible to his danger, nay, he rather seems to have felt it in its full force. He began to hesitate about the propriety of appearing ; not that he was afraid of danger, when he saw a proper call to expose either his fortunes or life, but he knew the devices of what he termed "Babylonish Rome ;" and that, in her estimation, the end sanctified the means :—on this account he was alarmed.

Luther's patron, the Elector, was the only person from whom he could expect any effectual protection in this critical emergency. Frederick, in his public conduct, still professed submission to the Holy See, and had been, only at the short interval of two or three years before, an enthusiastic admirer of Papal supremacy. The natural soundness of his understanding, aided by political reasons; the rapaciousness of the Church against which all his subjects exclaimed; the contempt with which his application for a golden rose* had been treated by Leo; the partiality of his favourite ministers for the new doctrine, combining with Luther's arguments, and the brilliant victories he had gained over all his opponents; seem to have alienated his affection from the Catholic Church.

What brooded on the mind of Luther, as has already been mentioned, was the terror of being carried to Rome. The consequences of that pilgrimage he knew well. But he was also unwilling to risk his personal safety in the hands of Cajetan, who was a Dominican Inquisitor. He had the dreadful example of John Huss before him, and of the never to be forgotten perfidy which his enemies reckoned it no ignominy to employ. Whilst he was labouring under this embarrassment, in order to comfort and soothe his mind, and give him the courage necessary for such an enterprise, the Elector pro-

* This is usually blessed by the Pope, with great solemnity, on some Sunday in Lent, and only presented to great favourites.

mised that he would not suffer him to be carried to Rome, and would give him letters of recommendation to the senate, and some of the principal inhabitants of the city of Augsburg. It is not only probable, but certain, that Frederick had arranged matters with the legate before he left the diet, in such a manner that Luther should not be sent to Rome, though he was dilatory in communicating this intelligence to the Reformer. Knowing his poverty and consequent inability to defray the expense which would necessarily attend such a journey, he furnished him with a small sum of money for that purpose. Thus poorly equipped for such an expedition, he was under the necessity of appearing to disadvantage, not only before the legate, but the whole of his countrymen also, whose eyes were now fixed upon him. Luther says, "That all the Germans, tired with the explications that were given, the scandalous sale of justice, and the infinite impostures of the Church, waited the issue of so interesting a business, with minds full of suspense, as I had attacked what neither any bishop nor divine had in times past dared to touch. The voice of the populace cherished me, because the arts and quackery of the Church of Rome, with which they had filled and harassed the whole world, had already become detestable in the sight of all." He who had the courage to oppose so powerful a body as the Church, and to whom the eyes of his countrymen were directed, was literally a pauper, and went to Augs-

burg on foot. At a late period of his life, he condemned his rashness in setting out upon such an expedition, and venturing in the midst of his enemies without obtaining a safe-conduct. This course he adopted in consequence of the command of the Elector, who, it would appear, conceived that he was safe enough without it, and that Cajetan would never attempt to offer any violence to his person.

The poverty of this extraordinary man at this time, must appear surprising when contrasted with the opulence of those whom he opposed. When he had got as far on his journey as Nuremberg, he was so meanly dressed, that he was under the necessity of borrowing a friar's cowl from his friend Linccius, a divine of his own order, that he might make a respectable appearance before the legate. At the distance of three German miles from Augsburg, he obtained an humble mode of conveyance, and entered that city upon Friday the 8th of October. He repaired immediately to the Augustinian convent, and delivered the Elector's letter, but lodged with the Carmelite friars.

Though Luther's finances were so exceedingly moderate, that he was under the necessity of being indebted to others for his support at Augsburg, yet he did not remain long in obscurity. Cajetan looked forward with great eagerness to his appearance. Relying upon his own dexterity in argument, no less than on the authority with which he was invested as the Pope's legate, he never doubted of success.

Had he been better acquainted with the undaunted spirit of his opponent, and the footing upon which he placed the controversy, he would have been less confident. He was, however, fully aware of the necessity of exercising the utmost precaution in so critical a conjuncture. It is probable that he had never examined Luther's arguments against indulgences. Be that as it may, he held them in great contempt. But the Reformer was protected by one of the most powerful of the Germanic princes; and, besides, his opinions had been received with open arms by all ranks. It was therefore deemed expedient, that a person of address, and practised in the art of deceit, should in the first instance, hold a conversation with Luther, who might be able to report to the legate in what tone of temper the Reformer was, and how he acquitted himself in discourse. The politics of the Church of Rome also suggested, that, if possible, the other princes should be prevailed on to avoid giving him any protection, or showing the least countenance to him or his opinions. He had repaired thither, as has been mentioned, without a safe-conduct; and to prevent him from obtaining this, was considered as an object of the utmost importance.

The accomplishment of these measures was confided to Urban, an Italian, who was in Cajetan's train, and well versed in all the intrigues of the Court of Rome. Shortly after Luther's arrival at Augsburg, this personage found means to be introduced to him, and was, in-

deed, the first individual with whom he had an interview. Urban conversed freely on the object of Luther's journey, but cautiously avoided giving the least hint of any commission he had received from his master. He was extremely desirous of obviating Luther's suspicions in regard to his personal safety, and employed the most soothing words in order to induce him to confide in the Cardinal. Nothing was omitted which he imagined would have a tendency to prevail upon him to appear before the legate, and banish every idea of bad faith from his mind.

How distracted soever Luther's mind might be at this trying season, he was so far from being overcome by the peril of his situation, that he was perfectly prepared for the worst that could befall him.

By means of his faithful friends, the Augustinians, Maximilian was prevailed upon to grant Luther a safe-conduct, though contrary to the inclination of the Cardinal.

Fortified by the safe-conduct which he had received from Maximilian, he ventured into the presence of the legate, in the confidence that how much soever Cajetan might be disposed, he durst not employ any personal violence, in direct opposition to the assurances of safety he had received from a prince whose friendship the Pope wished to cultivate. Whether the Cardinal had discovered any inclination to treat Luther harshly is not known; but upon the same day that he appeared, the Imperial Senate

thought proper to communicate the intelligence to him, that the Reformer had received a safe-conduct, and at the same time recommended that no harsh measure against him should be resorted to. There can be little doubt that they interfered in consequence of the interest of Frederick, yet it affords a satisfactory proof of the attention which Luther had already excited. The Cardinal received him very courteously. His behaviour, however, when first introduced into the presence of the legate, whilst it shows the submissiveness of his temper, does, at the same time, discover great simplicity, and little acquaintance with the world. The truth is, that Urban had imposed upon him. Not perceiving the base duplicity of this emissary, and supposing him to be a friend, he followed implicitly the instructions he had received from this man. On this occasion Urban persuaded Luther that the proper respectful manner in which he ought to behave, when admitted into the presence of the representative of Papal Majesty, was to fall prostrate before him on the ground. Luther supposed that this information was correct, because he knew that a similar mode of salutation was required from kings themselves; and as he did not wish to give offence, he determined to observe a customary ceremony, and accordingly did so. The Cardinal kindly raised him, and said, that it was not his intention to enter into a disputation, but in an amicable manner to settle the differences between them. So anxious was he to come to

an agreement with Luther, and that the conversation should be unrestrained, as not to allow the master of the ceremonies to interrupt them by his presence, when they began to talk upon business.

The legate spoke for some time in a mild and agreeable manner ; but he soon discovered the cause of his declining the dispute with Luther, and demanded, by authority of the Pope, that Luther should do three things ; First, abjure his errors ; Secondly, abstain from inculcating them for the future ; and Thirdly, abstain from all errors that had a tendency to disturb the peace of the Church. Luther felt an inclination to observe that he might as well have remained at Wittemburg in safety, without the danger or fatigue of so long a journey, and recanted there had he been so disposed ; but was contented at the present time with only requesting Cajetan to inform him in what respects he was in an error. The legate objected to two articles ; first, his opposition to the sale of indulgences. The disputation on this subject became quite desultory and confused. When Luther saw that no good end could be served by prolonging it ; that many topics were introduced, but none discussed ; and that the Cardinal was unwilling to appear to have conceded any thing, he requested that he might be allowed time to deliberate upon the subject. Both parties seem to have been disposed to relinquish the debate at this stage ; Luther for the reason assigned by himself, and which has

just been mentioned ; and Cajetan, it is probable, thought it most prudent to temporize a little, that his threats and promises might have time to make an impression upon the Reformer.

Luther opposed the Cardinal's sentiments in the most successful manner, and no attempt at a reply was made. The representative of Papal Majesty had agreed not to refer to the opinions of the scholastic doctors, but to the Scriptures and the canons, whose authority was acknowledged by both. When Luther, however, referred to the former of these in vindication of his sentiments, Cajetan either laughed at him, or stated in opposition the opinions of the scholastic doctors. This mode of behaviour during the interview was indecorous, and little suited to the dignity of a legate, or the great importance of the business he was called upon to transact. His attendants imitated his example, and imagined that by mere force of ridicule they could make Luther appear as one vanquished : but every measure that was adopted proved abortive. Luther was more than ever confirmed in the truth of his opinions, in consequence of the feebleness of his adversary's arguments and the levity of his behaviour. The Reformer was too inflexible a character to be withdrawn from his purpose ; he therefore constantly recalled the attention of the Cardinal to the Scriptures, by whose decision *alone* he was determined to abide. So confident was he of the superiority of his cause, that he earnestly

requested that a single authority might be produced from Scripture, or the holy fathers, contrary to his sentiments respecting the sacrament. They also differed as to the degree of importance that ought to be attached to the doctrines which formed the subjects of dispute. Luther esteemed that which related to the sacrament as of much more importance than indulgences. He considered the latter to be consistent with the profession of true Christianity, but not the former. The Cardinal was of a different opinion, and, in a conversation with Linccius, openly avowed, that if Luther would not oppose indulgences, the business could be easily settled, for the difference with respect to the sacrament was susceptible of an interpretation. Such a confession perfectly corresponded with the views of the Court of Rome, and did not escape the animadversion of the Reformer and his friends. When Staupitz was informed of it, he wished that a notary and witnesses had been present, when the Cardinal pronounced the words, that it might appear evident that *money* was esteemed of more value at Rome than *faith*.

Luther was fully sensible of the inconveniences which attended an interview conducted after the manner of this first conference. Aware how liable he was to be misrepresented, both as to his sentiments and mode of behaviour, he determined to use proper precautions, that the like should not again happen. Accordingly, he made his appearance on the next day, (Oc-

tober 13,) accompanied by four eminent senators of the Emperor, a notary, and witnesses. The ambassadors of the Elector of Saxony, Philip Feilitsch, a knight, John Ruel, a lawyer, and Staupitz, who, in the meantime, had come to Augsburg, were present. The temper of the Reformer was at this time much more disposed towards conciliatory measures than could have been expected. To give what was reckoned a legal form to the measure he thought proper to adopt, he protested before the notary and witnesses, and publicly read his protestation to the legate. This important document explains his tone of temper, as well as the foundation upon which he defended his opinions, and also accounts for the consequences which the publication of them produced.

“In the first place, I, brother Martin Luther, protest that I have respected, and am disposed to respect and follow, the holy Roman Church in all my sayings and actions, past, present, and future, and that, if I have said, or shall say, any thing contrary or otherwise, it is my wish to esteem it, and that others should esteem it, as not said.”—After reciting the three concessions already mentioned, as required by the Cardinal, he thus proceeds:—“I have only sought and disputed concerning the truth; I cannot therefore be condemned for merely seeking it, much less compelled to recant unheard, and not convinced. I this day protest, that I am not conscious to myself of having said any thing contrary to the Holy Scripture, the fa-

thers of the Church, the decretals of the Pope, or right reason; but that every proposition which I have expressed appears to me to be in reality true and consistent with the Catholic faith; nevertheless, as I am liable to error like other men, I have submitted, and now submit myself, to the judgment and determination of the true holy Church, and to all my superiors in knowledge. However, fully to satisfy my opponents, I offer personally to assign a reason for the sentiments I have espoused, either here or elsewhere, and even in public, if it be required. And if this be not agreeable to *the most Reverend Lord, &c.*, I am prepared to answer in writing their objections, if they have any to produce; and even more, to listen to the judgment and decision of the Imperial universities of Basil, Friburg, Louvain, and if this be not sufficient, to that of Paris itself.”*

A man who discovered such apparent openness to conviction, and placed the controversy upon so broad, but sound a basis—who challenged the attacks of his opponents, conscious that the attitude he had assumed could be maintained by him, was not likely to be diverted from prosecuting his inquiries farther. The new footing upon which he placed the controversy, evidently appears to have alarmed himself no less than his opponents. He therefore considered it necessary to tread very gently upon ground which had not as yet been fully

* Luth. i. 209.

explored. His caution was also increased, in consequence of his being sensible of the great hazard that accompanied any opposition to so powerful an adversary as the Church.

Cajetan, whose conduct, in consequence of the issue of his mission, was not approved of at Rome, was nevertheless not deficient in zeal, for he spoke so much, and disputed so keenly, that Luther had little time to reply. It is a curious circumstance, that the Cardinal, probably from his ardour in debate, lost his recollection so far, as to affirm, what upon actual inspection of the canons in the presence of Luther, he confessed to be a mistake. Staupitz, however, perceiving it was vain to expect that any service could accrue to Luther from debating in that manner, proposed that he should give in his defence in writing; and when this request was seconded by the Reformer himself, it was granted. It is remarkable that none but Cajetan attempted to dispute publicly with Luther, and that how ready soever the monks of his train and others were to write, they studiously shunned entering the lists with him in a public disputation.

The third interview he had with the Cardinal was upon the 14th of October. Possessed of that natural independence of spirit and behaviour, which is more or less felt by every one who is conscious of the superiority of his cause, and his ability to defend it, Luther was not afraid to present at this time in writing his defence of the two propositions which had been impugned by the Cardinal, and in which he

obviated the puerile reasonings of that defender of the Papal creed. The legate, as was to be expected, held it in the greatest contempt. In his letter to the Elector Frederick, he assumed a very high tone, but adduced no proof of the victory, which, as he said, had been gained by him, and was contented with an appeal to the authority of the Church, and his own personal credit. Luther had required that his answer to the Cardinal legate should be sent to Leo, and this was at last promised.

The two former interviews which had already taken place were evidently hostile to the accomplishment of the object of Cajetan's mission. In the third he seems to have been quite disconcerted, and feeling how inadequate his proficiency in the school of divinity was to oppose his antagonist, he, in the true spirit of the Dominican brotherhood, threatened to send him to Rome. This, which can be considered as little else than holding out the terrors of private assassination or public execution, he was not restrained from accomplishing by any regard to justice, or by what he profanely called his paternal regard for Luther. The politics of Germany fortunately crippled at this time the cruel severity of an unrelenting priesthood. Persuaded, therefore, that measures carried to such an extremity would only injure himself, and the cause, in a greater degree, he only commanded the intrepid Reformer to leave his presence, and not to return unless he should be sent for. He who possessed as much

courage as ever fell to the lot of any man, quietly acquiesced in the mandate of the legate, convinced that, by such imperious behaviour, he only expressed the weakness of the Papal cause ; and that the imbecile command to leave Augsburg, contained all which at that time Cajetan had in his power. Thus, at the beginning of the Reformation, the weakness of the Romish cause was providentially shown by the conduct of its representative, who, when unable to defend it by argument, had recourse to measures which operated as powerful auxiliaries in fortifying the mind, not of Luther only, but of those also who acted a secondary part in the achievement of that glorious enterprise.

There can be no doubt that Cajetan was at a great loss what plan he ought to follow. Most probably foreseeing the certainty of incurring that disgrace at the Court of Rome which was common to every unsuccessful negotiator, with whatever rectitude and zeal he might have acquitted himself ; sensible also that the friends of Luther were disgusted with his imperious conduct, he felt the necessity of adopting more conciliatory measures. Accordingly, he sent for Staupitz, provincial-vicar of the Augustinians in Saxony, in order that he might prevail on Luther to recant of his own accord, as it was not his wish that any violent measures should be resorted to, and assured him that he (Luther) might do so without being chargeable with guilt. Staupitz, without giving any particular explanation respecting his own views,

or his opinion of the probable result of his interfering, undertook the execution of this vain task. The legate, supposing that Staupitz heartily co-operated in accomplishing the same object with himself, then required more ; he requested that he would confute Luther from the Scripture. Staupitz, however, without reserve, replied, " That he required what was above his ability, because he was inferior to Luther, both in genius and the knowledge of the Scriptures." By making such a request, Cajetan afforded the most satisfactory proof how sensible he was of his own ability to refute the Reformer ; for as yet the legate was altogether unacquainted with the original languages in which the Scriptures were written.

The assurance that there was no criminality in recanting was treated with contempt by Luther. His principles were too honourable, and too well established, to allow him to comply. He concluded that, were he to do so, he would deserve that perpetual infamy which generally accompanies those who, contrary to their conviction, abjure the truth. Cajetan had ventured to propose this measure, in consequence of the jurisdiction which Staupitz, as provincial, had over Luther. But matters had been concerted with more art than the emissaries of Rome had imagined. Luther was absolved from obedience by the provincial, before the conference commenced. This was done, in the first place, that no reproach might fall upon the Augustinians in general, if Luther should be

punished ; and second, that Staupitz might not be without an excuse, if Cajetan should command him to exercise his authority in ordering Luther to recant or be silent.

Meanwhile Luther's friends were not indifferent to his safety ; and entertaining suspicions that this letter would not induce Cajetan to be more moderate in his demands, had recommended it to the Reformer to prepare an appeal to *the Pope when better informed*. This instrument is dated upon the 16th of October, but it was not presented till he had left Augsburg. He recapitulated, in this protest, his motives and conduct in his opposition to the Church, and gave a statement of his case. On the 18th he transmitted another letter to Cajetan, who was so haughty and overbearing, that he did not condescend to return an answer. It is not improbable that he imagined that Luther was beginning to relent, and that he would soon become less refractory. But from whatever motives his silence proceeded, it had the effect of leading Luther to adopt more decisive measures, and happily contributed to increase that rent, which might have been easily healed had he followed a different course.

Luther left Augsburg upon Wednesday, October 20. Early in the morning he mounted a horse that he had procured from Staupitz ; and Langenmantilius, a senator of Augsburg, who favoured his cause, aiding him in his escape from the city, he departed in a very great hurry, without either boots or spurs, or a sword ;

and accomplished a journey of eight German miles on the same day. When he dismounted he was so fatigued that he could not stand, but falling down upon the ground, he fell asleep. Staupitz, and other friends of Luther, also afraid of imprisonment, left Augsburg about the same time. A monk, in company with a notary, had engaged to deliver Luther's protest to the Cardinal; but, dreading his vengeance, they did not attempt it, but they fixed it in the market-place.

Cajetan was exceedingly enraged at this; and wrote a letter to the Elector of Saxony, in which he stated, "that so pestilent a heresy could not be suffered to exist; for at Rome they would prosecute the cause as soon as he had communicated the intelligence of what had happened."

The eyes of Luther were opened in the course of his journey home; for at Nuremburg he received a copy of the Pope's brief, in which the legate was appointed a judge in his cause so early as August 23. He was so exasperated, that he affirmed so diabolical a bull was not written by the Pope, but by some worthless fellow; and that from this instance it would appear customary at Rome to issue a summons, admonish, accuse, judge, condemn, and denounce upon the same day.

His situation became every day more perilous. He had nothing to expect from Rome but persecution, and that he would be deprived of the means of subsistence in the monastery,

as well as his professorship of divinity. He could not fully rely upon the Elector, whose conduct was at least equivocal. He proposed to leave Wittemberg, and repair to the university of Paris, whose sentiments respecting the power of the Pope were the same as his own. He at this time suggested the propriety of the Elector's writing to the Pontiff, and proposing that a commission should be appointed to try the cause in Germany. The language he employed is very striking,—“Not that I am very anxious about my own safety: it is cause of great grief to me that I am not worthy to suffer in an eminent degree for the truth. By my journey to Augsburg I have courted danger almost to the tempting of God. The prosperity of our university is the chief ground of my anxiety. I am unwilling that the studies of our most excellent youth, who are wonderfully ardent in the study of the Scriptures, should be strangled in the birth.” In another letter he compares himself to Abraham, the father of the faithful, who did not know whither he was going when he forsook his country and nation; but in the full confidence of the Divine protection, he said, he did know, for God is every where.

Frederick proposed that the cause should be tried by the Emperor, and in the mean time communicated to Luther Cajetan's letter, which he was desired to answer. He undertook this task with great good will, and with his wonted promptness produced an answer in the form of

a letter to the Elector. After affirming that Cajetan's object was to send him to Rome, he thus proceeds: "I am not excessively disinclined to go into exile, as I perceive that my enemies have prepared snares for me on all sides, nor do I know where I can live safe. What can I, a miserable and humble monk, expect? or rather, what danger have I not reason to fear, seeing that so illustrious a Prince is threatened unless I be sent to Rome, and banished from your territories? Wherefore, lest any injury should befall your highness on my account, I am willing to leave my native country, and to go wherever a merciful God shall be pleased to point out, leaving the issue with him. I with reverence bid you farewell, and sincerely take my leave of you, giving you infinite thanks for all the favours you have conferred upon me; and in whatever part of the world I may be, I shall never be unmindful of your highness, but always sincerely and gratefully pray for your happiness, and that of your family." In such a state of disquietude was he, that in a short time afterwards he wrote to Spalatin that he was preparing for his departure.

Cajetan's letter had given offence to Frederick; he therefore took a more decided part in defending Luther. The whole body of the university of Wittemburg applied to the Elector to protect their colleague, who gained an accession of courage, and he published an appeal from the Pope to a General Council. Fortu-

nately for the interests of mankind, for the dissemination of true religion and useful knowledge, the Court of Rome seems to have been seized with a kind of infatuation. A bull was issued containing a repetition of what Luther had refuted, but expressed in ambiguous language, that an opportunity of recanting might be afforded to him. Thus ended the transactions of 1518.

CHAPTER II.

MEANWHILE, the number of students that repaired to Wittemberg rapidly increased, principally by means of the fame of Luther and Melancthon, who had become professor of Greek in the course of the preceding year. This encouraged Frederick to protect Luther. Besides, the Emperor Maximilian died in the beginning of 1519, and during the interregnum of five months, Frederick possessed the sole power in his own principality.

Cajetan still remained in Germany, but being blamed at Rome for want of address in not adopting a different line of conduct towards the Reformer, the business was committed to Charles Miltitz, a layman, who was appointed nuncio, or the Pope's ambassador. He arrived in Misnia, his native province, about the end of the year 1518. One of the first of his measures was to summon Tetzel to appear before him at Altenburg. Worn out with the vexatious occupation of retailing indulgences, and

disgusted with the ingratitude of his employers, he had retired to a Dominican monastery at Leipsic, and in a letter stated that he could not possibly comply with the summons.

Luther, however, had a conference with Miltitz upon the 7th January, 1519. The nuncio insisted much upon the danger of schism, and lamented that the seeds of discord should be sown in the Church. Imagining that every thing was now in a fair way, he went to Leipsic, and twice reprimanded Tetzel in the presence of his provincial. And when he came to Augsburg, he wrote a letter to the Elector, in which he stated that matters were in a train of being amicably settled. He only requested that Luther should publish nothing until he returned, because he had reported the whole to the Court of Rome.

Miltitz directed his course to the Elector of Treves, that he might have an opportunity of consulting with him and Cajetan, who was then upon a visit to that prelate, and according to whose directions Miltitz was commanded to act. The result of this consultation betrayed both the want of unity of design in the Pope's agents, and a total disregard to those conciliatory measures of which Miltitz had set the example, and whose effects were shown to be so salutary to the interests of the Romish faith. Luther had expressed no great disinclination to defend himself against the Archbishop of Treves in the course of the conversation at Altenburg. This concession was eagerly laid

hold of, and it was resolved that he should be sent for, to plead his cause before that Elector. Luther, who had strong powers of reasoning, and who had already anticipated the greater number of his contemporaries in regard to the nature of true religion, *now* felt indignant, after having appealed to the Pope, to be called before his deputy.

Luther continued to discharge his public duty as a professor with his usual energy and applause. In the mean time he wrote a letter to the Pope in which he expressed himself with great freedom respecting his opponents, and his deference to the authority of the Church.

In order to set aside the charge of heresy, and to distinguish between what might be disputed and what ought to be believed, he touched very gently upon the intercession of saints, purgatory and ecclesiastical censures, and yet in such doubt was he, that he whispered to Spalatin, that he had strong suspicions of the Pope being antichrist, or his messenger. It is difficult to afford even a tolerable representation of Luther's opinions, or of the state of his mind at this time. He wavered between the fear of incurring the vengeance of the Church, and the respect which he owed and wished to pay to his own convictions. Though for a season discouraged, he did not desist from prosecuting his inquiries, and when he resumed his wonted composure, he applied with such ardour, that opposition seemed to give new vigour to his energies, and additional strength to his

confidence in the truth of his sentiments. In proof of this, it may be added, that in a letter to Spalatin he said, "that it was impossible to treat of Scripture truth, or what the Church acknowledged to be such, without offending that beast."

Luther nevertheless met with many opponents. Among that number, besides the minorities, was Eckius, whom Bodenstein, commonly called Carolostadt, opposed. The public disputation in which Luther had been engaged were principally carried on by himself. But it was agreed that a disputation should take place at Leipsic between Eckius and Carolostadt. Eckius, confident of victory, looked forward to the period when he should have an opportunity of refuting the Lutheran heresy, and upon June 27, it began in the castle of Leipsic. Luther and his friends entered the town, attended by a great number of followers from Wittemburg—Carolostadt, seated alone in a chariot, went first. Bernim, Prince of Pomerania, followed, accompanied by Luther and Melancthon; a great proportion of the students, *in arms*, attached to the same cause, brought up the rear. This disputation was long protracted, and, as usually happens, both parties retained their own peculiar sentiments. It is impossible to doubt that any moderation which Eckius discovered in the course of the disputation, arose from perceiving the vanity of behaving otherwise in present circumstances. He, however, after the termination of the dispute, wrote to the Elector of

Saxony, and insisted that Luther's books, instead of being read, should be burned. The Elector, with his accustomed caution, returned a civil but ambiguous answer. Eckius was so exasperated, that he lost all patience, poured abuse upon the *doctrines* of Luther, and made many bitter reflections against him. The Reformer exposed the feebleness of his defence, and in the most exulting language informed him that he had been vanquished by Carolostadt.

George, Duke of Saxony, a zealous Papist, wrote to his cousin the Elector, beseeching him to oppose Luther, but this application did not succeed. During the course of this year, 1519, John Tetzel died.

CHAPTER III.

LUTHER continued to make progress in his inquiries, and from time to time he communicated their result to the public. He addressed a letter to Charles V., who had lately come into the possession of the Imperial crown, and from the obligations under which Charles lay to the Elector, he augured well of the success of his application. He stated that he had been dragged before the public against his will, and that he had studied to publish nothing but evangelical truth in opposition to the superstitious opinions derived from human tradition. Two days afterwards he gave to the world his *Protestation*, or the open declaration of his sentiments.

These representations produced no permanent impression upon his enemies, and his appeal to reason and Scripture, while in reality it excited their fears, was pretended to be unworthy of their regard. In the same tone of humble submission he wrote to the Archbishop of Mentz, from whom he received a civil answer, earnestly inculcating moderation. His letter to the Bishop of Mersburg is expressed with greater freedom, and the reply he received contained much more palpable reproof. The whole of this correspondence shows that the cause had assumed too respectable an appearance for them explicitly to declare their sentiments.

Miltitz, whose negotiations had commenced under so favourable circumstances, had the mortification of seeing the mild measures he had recommended completely superseded : he was nevertheless still desirous of compromising the differences. For this purpose he employed the mediation of the Augustinians. A deputation was accordingly sent to Luther, who readily consented to write to Leo in the terms they had suggested. This produced the famous letter to the pontiff prefixed to his treatise on "Christian Liberty." It is certainly a most extraordinary production. He professed the greatest respect for the Pope, but said that the Court of Rome was more corrupt than Babylon or Sodom, and compares him to Daniel in Babylon, and to Ezekiel among scorpions. The whole composition is written in a similar style.

Frederick had employed Valentin Teutleben

to transact some private business at Rome. From this person he learned that Luther was now esteemed so formidable an opponent by the Pontiff, that nothing less than his destruction was deemed sufficient to stop his endeavours at reformation, and the schism which by his means had been introduced. The great object, therefore, was to prevail upon the Elector to desert him. It was therefore resolved to retard, and perhaps in the issue to refuse, Teutleben's application altogether. This agent ascribed the Pope's unwillingness to proceed in this and other business, *altogether* to rashness, and the want of modesty in Doctor Martin Luther, who, according to report, was protected by him. Frederick denied that he had ever undertaken the defence of Luther's opinions, who was prepared to defend them himself; that Luther, of his own accord, had offered to leave the university, and even Saxony, and would have done so before this time, had not Miltitz, by many entreaties, interceded not to send him away, lest he should remove to a place where he could write and act with more freedom and safety.

This letter was communicated to Leo, and produced a reply, in which he expressed himself as if Frederick had been a declared enemy of Luther. It is full of the most abject flattery and duplicity, and of the most violent abuse of Luther, who, he says, had been introduced into the world by Satan, the enemy of the human race, &c. Having therefore called a council,

many things had been agitated and discussed ; at length by the direction of the Holy Spirit, who in causes of this kind was said never to be absent from the Holy See, &c., it was decreed that a bull should be published, condemning Luther's heretical opinions, and that a copy of that instrument should be sent.

Before proceeding farther in the history of this famous bull, it will be proper to notice a few circumstances in the life of Luther, which contributed towards its publication at this time.

The university of Louvain and Cologne had already published their condemnation of the Lutheran heresy. They had volunteered in this service, and were, of all the seminaries of learning, the most devoted to the Roman See. They were actuated by the basest motives ; and the malevolent and vulgar manner in which they declared their opposition, was worthy of the cause they wished to serve. Their sanction was considered as of great importance, and mention was made of it in the bull. Luther replied with spirit to their condemnation.

Numerous as his enemies were, the seeds of the new doctrine began to take deep root ; and persons in eminent stations extended their protection to him. Two German noblemen, Sylvester a Schaumburg, and Francis Sickingen, offered to protect him. Their letters show the uncommon interest which the cause had excited in Germany. They understood from several learned men that his doctrine was founded on the Scriptures ; and that, although he had sub-

mitted himself to a Council, and to the judgment of pious and well-informed persons, his life was in danger, and that he proposed to take refuge among the Bohemians. He was offered the protection of one hundred noblemen in Franconia, with whom he could live in safety, until his doctrine was investigated. This was the first unqualified testimony of approbation he received from those who had it in their power to defend him against the unrelenting fury of his persecutors. Whilst it increased his courage, it gratified his feelings to find that a respect for the word of God was gaining ground apace. This he could not conceal from his friend Spalatin, and then proceeded in the following animated manner :—“ The die is cast ; the fury and favour of Rome are despised by me ; I will never be reconciled, nor have any connexion with them. Let them condemn and burn my books ; I, in my turn, unless I cannot procure fire, will condemn and burn publicly the whole pontifical code.” Upon the 23d August he wrote to Rome, and used similar expressions.

Though Luther’s mind was subject to great vicissitudes, in consequence of the harassing nature of his situation, he never gave way to indolent habits, nor suffered the trials to which he was exposed to interrupt that severe application to study, which he considered the chief pleasure of his life. He accordingly persevered with the utmost steadfastness in his labours, and addressed a book to the Emperor Charles, and to the nobility of the Empire. The freedom

of the strictures on the corruptions of the Church, and particularly the insinuation, that the Papacy was the seat of antichrist, gave considerable alarm to his friends, who viewed it in no other light than as the signal for war. Luther, however, defended himself by only saying, that these were his sentiments. The subjects introduced in this treatise are very miscellaneous. Not contented with directing his attack against the usurpations of the Pope, he reproved the vices of the clergy in general—animadverted on confession, the mass, pilgrimages, &c.—proposed the reform of monasteries and collegiate churches—the studies prosecuted at the universities—the canon law—the necessity of studying divinity—the right understanding of Scripture, and the nature of the religious instruction that ought to be communicated at schools. He inveighed against luxury of all kinds, in dress, and of the table—foreign perfumes—usury and monopolies—the neglect of the education of youth, and prostitution. On this last topic, he seized an opportunity of reprobating premature monastic vows—said that no one ought to be admitted into these institutions before the age of thirty—and that beggars, whether monks or laymen, ought not to be tolerated. Towards the conclusion, he observed that he was aware of the persecution which he must endure.

From some cause now unknown, a misunderstanding took place between the students and citizens of Wittemberg. Luther contracted much odium by reproving the students, and the

Elector judged proper to send Spalatin to visit the university. He reported that several of the students had left the college, chiefly on account of the plague, but that the greater number still remained; that Luther was in good spirits, and was writing against the bull; but, out of respect to the Elector, said he would do it with moderation; and declared he would burn the Pope's decretals as soon as he learned that *his* books had been burned. He saw more than thirty letters addressed to Luther, full of consolation and piety. He also reported, that two hundred students had absented themselves, but others were daily coming in their stead. The crowd was so great, that he himself had seen six hundred attending the lectures of Melancthon, and four hundred those of Luther. So popular as a preacher was the latter, that both the church of Wittemberg, and that belonging to the monastery, were too small to contain those who came to hear his discourses. The prior of the Augustinians was afraid that both the chapel, and the building connected with it, would fall down on account of the multitude.

Eckius in the mean time succeeded in accomplishing the object of his mission to Rome, and at length procured a bull condemning Luther. Leo appointed a congregation, as it is called, or assembly of cardinals, prelates, theologians, and canonists, to whom he remitted the management of this affair. They were unanimously agreed as to employing the thunder of the Vatican against the Lutheran heresy, but violent dis-

putes arose as to the mode of procedure. At last they agreed to divide the cause into three parts—the doctrine, the books, and the person—that Luther be summoned to appear within a suitable time—that both the doctrine and the books should be condemned, and the latter burned. As early as the 3d of May, the bull was ready to be expedited at the next consistory of cardinals. Eckius claimed great merit in exhibiting Luther's errors in their real light at Rome, for they were little understood there till he arrived. He wished that it should be believed he had undertaken this journey with reluctance; but Luther, who, by some means not known, got possession of the letter, published it with notes, and proved his sycophancy and selfishness; for he went to Rome to seek preferment. The bull was issued from the Papal chamber on the 15th of June, but it was not published in Germany till a considerable time afterwards.

Though Luther publicly used very bold expressions, and really was prepared to meet death in its most awful forms, like every man of true courage, he did not court danger, but, on the contrary, chose rather to avoid it, and to give it that consideration which a proper sense of self-preservation naturally suggests. To incur ecclesiastical censure, and to be excommunicated by the Pope, did not excite very pungent feelings in his own mind. The views he had been led to form concerning Scripture truth enabled him to despise an authority which was only

assumed, and that he knew only existed in the imaginations of the abettors of the Papacy. But to be excommunicated by the Pope was not beheld in the same light by the majority of his countrymen. It was considered to be a punishment which involved in it consequences of the most grievous kind. And at this time, when the balance was so tremulous, it is not surprising that Luther should have dreaded the worst. He was prevailed on by the advice of his friends to represent to Spalatin what they considered as essentially necessary towards his preservation. This he did upon the 3d of October. He requested this faithful friend to use his interest that an Imperial edict might be procured by the Elector, that no one should be at liberty to condemn him, unless it was previously shown that his sentiments were inconsistent with Scripture. He complained, in the most earnest and affecting manner, of the numerous libels published against him, and ardently expressed a wish, that preachers could be found who would make known to the common people what he had really written, instead of ascribing sentiments to him which he had never maintained. He added, that Eckius was not treated now with the same degree of respect as formerly, but was looked on as a dangerous person, and worthy of contempt; that, afraid of his personal safety, he skulked among the Dominicans.

This bull, which constituted, as it were, the origin and foundation of the Council of Trent, and occasioned so much disturbance in the

Church, came to Wittemberg about the beginning of October; for, upon the 13th of that month, Luther stated in a letter that Eckius had brought it. He determined to conduct himself as if he considered it a forged bull, and expressed himself with the most unlimited freedom in regard to it. This bull, so fatal in its consequences to the Popish Church, has afforded a subject for criticism to all writers of ecclesiastical history, whether Popish or Protestant; and, indeed, taken as a whole, it is certainly a curious piece. Leo claimed to himself, and to the Holy See, that extravagant and unbounded authority which the most enterprising of his predecessors could not uniformly maintain. Luther is compared to Porphyry, the celebrated enemy of Christianity, and is styled the reviver of the Grecian and Bohemian schisms. Forty-one heresies are selected from his works, and are condemned, "as pestilential, pernicious, scandalous, as having a tendency to seduce pious and simple persons, contrary to all charity and reverence for the holy Roman Church, the mother of the faithful, and mistress of the faith," &c. Those heretical articles are little else than a repetition of the propositions which Luther published in 1517, and first gave occasion to his revolt from the Church. The same doctrines are scattered through all his writings.

The bull itself is fraught with the most extravagant presumption. By the power of the Papal See, the Imperial crown, it is affirmed,

had been transferred from the Greeks to the Germans. A power is claimed, not only of inflicting ecclesiastical punishments, but of depriving any one of their property or privileges, civil as well as sacred. The infamous bulls of Pius II. and Julius II., that declared every one a heretic who appealed from the Pope to a Council, are quoted, and Luther condemned for what the whole Gallican Church had held ever since the assembly of the Council of Constance. Denunciations of a shocking kind are made against Luther, and those who favoured his opinions. They are not to be allowed ecclesiastical burial, and consequently consigned to everlasting damnation—rendered incapable of performing any legal act, or outlawed—are declared infamous—guilty of high treason—heretics—and liable to suffer the punishments which the law inflicts on such offenders. Luther is accused of obstinately disregarding the admonitions and kindness which the Pope had shown to him, and particularly for not repairing to Rome under the protection of the safe-conduct, and the offer of his expenses being paid. Even those books that contain none of the errors enumerated, are to be burned. In short, those that are written, or published, *to be written or published*, or any of them proceeding from a man hostile to the orthodox faith, are therefore very suspicious; and that all remembrance of him may be obliterated from the society of the faithful of Christ, no one is to presume to read, assert, preach, praise, print, pub-

lish, or defend, by himself, another, or others, directly or indirectly, tacitly or expressly, publicly or in private, or in any respect retain them in their own, or in other places, public or private, but rather consign them to the flames. Luther is summoned to appear at Rome within sixty days, to answer to the charges alleged against him, but in case he should not obey the summons, the civil as well as the ecclesiastical powers are commanded to seize his person and adherents, and send them to Rome. Lest Luther and others should pretend ignorance, the bull was ordered to be fixed upon the doors of St. Peter's at Rome, and of the Apostolic Court of Chancery, also on the doors of the Cathedral Churches of Brandenburg, Misnia, and Mersburg.

Those who live in an age and country where religious toleration exists, and not impaired by the base intrusion of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny, can hardly form any conception of what could induce any man, or body of men, to impose such shackles upon the liberty of private judgment.

The publication of the bull in Germany had been committed to Eckius. How much soever he might be flattered by this mark of honour, when he returned to Saxony his expectations were grievously disappointed. He imagined he had only to present it, and all reverence and submission would instantly be shown. When he arrived at Leipsic, he found that matters were differently situated from what he expected.

George, Duke of Saxony, though a bigoted Papist, would not permit its publication in that city, unless the permission of the Bishop of Mersburg was previously procured. When this prelate was applied to, he put it off to the month of April of the subsequent year.

Eckius had published the bull in several places, and was in the habit of showing it with great pomp. At Leipsic, the senate presented him with a gilt cup and a sum of money. On 29th September, some young men of family, nevertheless, affixed bills in ten places containing threats against him, which induced him to take refuge in a monastery, and refused to be seen. He procured a mandate, enjoining the students to be quiet, but all to no purpose. They composed ballads upon him, which they sung through the streets ; and daily sent to the monastery intimations of their hostility. They were joined by one hundred and fifty of the Wittemberg students, who were very much incensed against him. Eckius fled to Friburg by night.

Similar tumults (though not indeed carried to a great extent) were raised in many other parts of Germany ; the Elector of Saxony did not consent to the publication of the bull in his dominions, and his example was followed by many other persons. The students at the universities were in general favourable to Luther. At Erfurt they tore it in pieces, and threw it into the river. It was received no where with marks of regard, or even common respect.

The clergy in general received it favourably, but even among them a considerable number of liberal minded men reprobated the spirit and sentiments of the bull, and wished Luther success.

The Reformer now had recourse to a measure, which, as it was legal, could not be objected to by the Pope himself. Upon November 17th, he protested before a notary and witnesses, and appealed from the Pope to a General Council. This took place within the Augustine monastery at Wittemberg. He had done the same about a year before, and wished that this second appeal should be considered as an appendix to the former. He now exchanged the mild and reserved manner in which he had spoken of Leo, for expressions which sufficiently conveyed to every one the abhorrence which he entertained at his measures.

As soon as copies of the bull could be procured, the attention of all the lovers of liberal knowledge, true religion, and who wished well to the interests of mankind, was directed to it. It appeared to them to be a struggle between the right to exercise the faculty of reason, and that of the presumptuous claims of a lordly Pontiff. Among that generous band was Ulrick Hutten, a young man of genius, of family and fortune, a philosopher, a wit, a poet, well acquainted with the corruptions of the Church, and as well disposed to lend his assistance to correct the abuses which had crept in. He had already distinguished himself as a zealous promoter of

learning. He published Leo's bull, and annexed to it short notes, in which he exposed the weakness of the Popish cause, and the presumptuous encroachments he made. These notes are written in a very bold style indeed, and gave occasion to the abettors of Popery to accuse the Reformers of an intention to revolt against their civil rulers.

Luther himself was too ardent a person, and too confident in the goodness of his cause, as well as in the weakness of his adversaries, to remain inactive. He published an answer to the execrable bull of Antichrist, and a short time after, "An assertion of all the articles of Martin Luther condemned by the bull of Leo X." In both of these treatises, he animadverted with uncommon severity upon the measures adopted by the Court of Rome.

The universities of Cologne and Louvain had distinguished themselves by their opposition to Luther. They burned his books; and the Pope's bull had, in the most peremptory manner, commanded every one in whose possession they were, to consign them to the flames, and had set the example at Rome. Luther determined to retaliate upon his persecutors after a similar manner. He caused public notification to be given to the citizens, doctors, and students of the university of Wittemberg, that he purposed to burn the *Antichristian Decretals* upon Monday 10th December. So novel a scene excited great interest. Accordingly, at nine o'clock A. M., an immense concourse of people

assembled, and shortly after began to move in regular companies towards the spot where the ceremony was to be performed, which was at a little distance from the city of Wittemberg. Having there partaken of a slight repast, an eminent member of the university erected a funeral pile, and set it on fire ; after which, Luther took Gratian's Abridgment of the Canon Law—the letters commonly called Decretals of the Pope—the Clementines and Extravagants—and last of all, the bull of Leo X. He threw all these into the fire, and at the same time cried with a loud voice, “Because ye have troubled the holy of the Lord, therefore let eternal fire trouble you.” Having accomplished this, he returned into the city, accompanied by the same multitude. All this was done without any riot, so unanimous were they in defending the sentiments of their favourite professor.

Luther drew up a justification of his conduct, and subjoined thirty different articles, as a specimen of the errors and usurpations of the Papacy. He concluded by affirming, that the sum of the whole canon law might be comprehended in this proposition, “That the Pope is God upon earth, superior to all in heaven or on earth, spiritual or temporal. All things are the Pope's, to whom no man dare say, What dost thou ?” He added, that the Pope never, not even once, overcame any one, either by Scripture or reason, who had spoken, written, or done any thing against him, but always forced them to give way, excommunicated, burned, or put

them to death by some other method, by means of kings, princes, and others who favoured the Papacy.

The Pope was exceedingly anxious to prevail upon the Elector of Saxony to withdraw his patronage, and if possible to induce him to consent that the books of the Reformer should be burned, and that he should punish or imprison him, or send him to Rome. For this purpose Jerome Alexander and Marinus Caracciolum, in the beginning of November, were sent as nuncios to Frederick, who was then at Cologne. Their endeavours, however, were unsuccessful ; they only received a vague and general answer.

Luther received the intelligence of the burning of his books with firmness and composure of mind. Several circumstances had a tendency to encourage him. At Mentz the populace treated the burning of his books with great contempt ; and those who were employed to put them in the fire, did it at the hazard of their lives. There were similar riots even at Louvain. At Venice his writings were in great request ; and as soon as they arrived there, were immediately sold. The Pope and the Patriarch of Venice prohibited them from being read, made a search in order to seize them, but only found one imperfect copy. Even at Rome and Bologna he had partisans. The Elector Frederick asked Erasmus what he thought of Luther ? After a good deal of hesitation, he answered, that Luther had erred in two particulars—“ He had touched the Pope’s crown, and

the bellies of the monks." At which Frederick laughed very heartily, and never forgot it. The seeds of the new doctrine were also sown in the Palatinate, though it was not publicly acknowledged nor established till 1523.

To obviate Luther's objections to the partiality of the judges, some well-meaning persons proposed to nominate the Emperor Charles V., Henry VIII. of England, and the King of Hungary. Perhaps more unfit arbitrators could not have been selected. The cause was already far past arbitration, and was rapidly hastening to a total separation from the Church of Rome.

CHAPTER IV.

THE term granted to Luther for repairing to Rome had expired, and therefore, that the measures previously concerted and acted on might not appear to be relinquished, a new bull made its appearance on the 3d of January, 1521. The burning of Luther's books in different parts of Germany was referred to, and an express order given to all priests to publish the *final* excommunication. But this bull was now quite disregarded; the manner in which it was received afforded the strongest proof how little injury the thunder of the Vatican could do to the Reformation.

The Emperor, in conformity with the golden bull of Charles IV. ought to have held his first diet at Nuremberg; but as that city was infected with the plague, it was held at Worms.

The Elector of Saxony accompanied the Emperor to the diet. The cause of Luther had already excited so much attention, and was in a manner so nearly related to the tranquillity of the empire, that various conversations and transactions took place between those two princes in regard to it. Charles informed the Elector that the Pope's nuncios had often requested him to burn Luther's books, both in Burgundy and in Germany, as the best means of preventing future evils; but he remembered that the Elector had expressed a wish that nothing should be determined against him until he was heard, lest the common people should make it a handle for raising commotions. He therefore had previously requested that he should bring Luther along with him to the diet, and promised to take good care that he should be heard fully by learned and wise men, and be protected from injury. Frederick gave his usual ambiguous answer.

Towards the end of 1520, and beginning of 1521, when the Emperor, the Elector of Saxony, and many other princes, were at Worms, they *publicly* took under consideration the propriety of calling Luther before the diet. The agents of Leo were assiduous in accomplishing this, and exerted every nerve to gain over Charles and his ministers, and impress them with the belief that it was impossible to compose the differences by any other method.

Frederick, who was well acquainted with what was going forward, caused Luther to be

informed by Spalatin of what was likely to happen, and inquired of the Reformer himself, what he would do if he were summoned by the Emperor to appear before the diet. Luther replied, "That he would certainly come, and would esteem the Emperor's summons as proceeding from God. If violence were offered to his person, which he did not think impossible, he would commend his cause to that God who delivered the three children from the fiery furnace. If it did not seem proper to God to preserve him, his life was of no moment, when compared with Christ's, and what he suffered." After quoting the second Psalm, "Kings of the earth," &c., he added, "It is not my province to determine whether less or greater danger shall accrue to the Gospel by my life or death. You know that the truth of God is a rock of offence placed for the falling and rising of many in Israel. It is my duty to pray that Charles may not stain his administration at its commencement with his or my blood. I should wish rather to die by the hands of the Romanists, lest he and all connected with him should be involved by intermeddling with the cause. You are well acquainted with what befell the Emperor Sigismund, after the murder of John Huss—nothing succeeded with him. He died without male offspring, and Ladislaus, his daughter's son, died in a short time, so that in one generation his name was extinct. His wife Barbara was a disgrace to the name of Queen, &c. But if it be so determined, that I am not

only to be delivered to Popes, but to the *Gen-tiles*; let the will of the Lord be done, Amen. I have told you my mind plainly. You conjecture every thing correctly in regard to me, excepting that I shall have recourse to flight, or recantation. I am unwilling to fly, but much more to recant. May the Lord Jesus comfort me; for I can do neither without hazarding the piety and salvation of many."

The Elector's conduct was exceedingly reserved, but it is impossible to doubt of his having undertaken the protection of Luther in good earnest. The resolution of summoning him had been taken by the Emperor much more rapidly than was expected by either party. The letter containing the order was given to Frederick, but he refused to transmit it. On the 25th of January Luther wrote to the Elector as follows:—"As to what pertains to myself, I am most ready to appear at the ensuing Imperial diet at Worms, before equitable, learned, and good judges, who are above all suspicion, provided I obtain a sufficient security, and a safe-conduct to protect me in both going and returning. By the assistance of Almighty God, I shall make it so appear, and excuse myself, that all shall be really convinced I have not been actuated by a rash, thoughtless, or inordinate self-will, or by any prospect of temporal or secular honour or advantage, but that whatever I have written or taught, has been proposed and done according to my conscience, my oath, and duty as an unworthy teacher of the Holy

Scriptures, for the sake of promoting the praise and glory of God, the salvation and happiness of the Catholic Church, and the welfare and advantage of the whole German nation—to the rooting out of the most dangerous abuses and superstitions, and for the emancipation of the whole Christian republic from so many infinite, innumerable, impious, damnable, and tyrannical reproaches, disgraces, grievances, and blasphemies."

Upon the 6th of March, Charles wrote a letter, summoning the Reformer to appear at Worms within twenty-one days. He promised him protection on his journey. It has been affirmed that he was also commanded not to harangue the populace on the road. So violent were the tempers of his adversaries, that his friends were jealous of the Emperor's sincerity, and consequently of the degree of regard that would be paid to the safe-conduct. A strong party among the nobility favoured Luther, principally through the influence of the Elector of Saxony. They guaranteed his safety when passing through their territories. They remembered the fate of John Huss,* and were afraid lest similar perfidy should be exercised towards Luther.

Having prevailed on Charles to summon

* This violation of good faith by Sigismund afterwards received the sanction of the Council of Constance, when it was decreed, that temporal princes should not be obliged to keep their promise of security to heretics by whatever tie they may be engaged. Lenfant's Hist. Con. Const.

Luther on the subsequent day, 7th March, they ventured to propose more decided steps, and their efforts were not in vain. A decree was issued, commanding that all Luther's books should be submitted to the inspection of the Magistrates.

The Emperor, who was in a great measure a stranger to the affairs of Germany, and not sufficiently aware of the delicacy with which such a cause required to be treated, had been imposed on by the Pope's emissaries. Those, however, who were well acquainted with the progress of Luther's opinions, and the impression they had made, considered it their duty to represent how ineffectual, and how injurious such a measure would be. Accordingly, the Imperial College, in the most respectful manner, gave the Emperor the fullest credit for doing justice to the cause. In pretty plain language, they represented that bad consequences would ensue from so precipitate a measure, as Luther's doctrines had excited great interest, and had been published through the whole of Germany—it was impossible to apply any remedy, unless an audience were granted. They recommended that the question should be proposed to him, "Whether he was willing to disavow articles, which were contrary to the holy Christian faith, received by our ancestors, and preserved to this moment." When this was answered, they suggested that he could be heard upon other topics. They also pledged themselves to lend all their assistance in executing the Emperor's mandate,

if Luther should be found guilty and yet not recant. At the same time, they subjoined a petition, that he would correct those abuses by which Germany was injured by the See of Rome. Charles promised that the grievances should be redressed, and wished them to specify what needed correction.

Meanwhile the Pope's nuncios obtained a letter, as well as money, from Rome, to aid the pontifical authority. Though Luther remained at Wittemberg, he received the agreeable intelligence, that the truth which he defended had as many protectors at Worms as would prevent his condemnation without being heard or confuted. The measures of the Pontiff had become unpopular in Saxony and Bohemia, and in proportion as that increased, an attachment to Luther's doctrine was augmented. The Bohemians had translated some of his small pieces into their own language, and the youth at the university during the holydays diverted themselves at the expense of the Pope. At this time also, an eminent artist, Lucas Cranachius, engraved figures on wood, and printed them on paper, containing the history of Christ and Antichrist, and represented how different the end of each was. Luther furnished inscriptions to these prints, and sent them to Spalatin upon the 7th March.

Spalatin had informed Luther, that the purpose of his being summoned to appear before the diet was to recant several of his opinions, of which he transmitted a list. Luther replied

that he would not recant; and added, "If this be all that is wanted, I can retract where I am. If they intend by the summons to put me to death, and by the answer I am determined to give, to declare me a rebel, I am willing to make my appearance, being resolved not to fly, nor leave the world in the field of battle. I am fully persuaded that my enemies will never rest until they have put me to death."

In the good providence of God, the Elector Frederick conducted himself with great propriety in this critical conjuncture. He was afraid, that if he showed much attention to Luther, he would be suspected of partiality. All the necessary preparations were however made, that the success of Luther's cause might not be impeded. He gave orders to the provost and senate of Wittemberg, that no molestation should be offered to the Emperor's messenger, and, if necessary, that a guard should be given him.

Luther's journey to Worms was certainly an important, if not the most important event in his life. The consequence of that diet brought the cause of the Reformer to greater maturity than it could have otherwise attained, and hastened Luther's total separation from the Romish communion. The senate of Wittemberg furnished him with a covered wagon, such as merchants who attend fairs use, and was the only mode of conveyance then in general use in Germany. Besides three friends, Jerome Schurf, a lawyer, accompanied him as counsel. Some

others joined the party on the road. Duke John, brother to the Elector of Saxony, treated them hospitably, and furnished them with what was necessary for the journey. Luther had not agreed to the condition of not preaching on the road, for at Erfurt he explained the nature of justification, and declaimed against the vices of the clergy ; he also exercised his talents in this way at Issenach. Perhaps no one ever received so extraordinary testimonies of the great interest he had excited, and of the feeling which pervaded all ranks, that the issue of his appearance at the diet might be favourable to the success of his cause. Different cities in the principality of Saxony rivalled each other in honouring him as he passed. The inhabitants of Erfurt, when they heard of his approach, came out in a body to the distance of two German miles to meet him. At Leipsic the Papists had a powerful party, but even the senate of that city presented him with wine, an honour only conferred upon illustrious strangers.

The agitation of the great Reformer's mind was excessive in the course of this journey. The report was currently circulated of his having been already condemned at Worms. From fatigue and the distracted state of his mind, he was taken ill on the road ; and from Frankfort he informed Spalatin, " that he had been sick during the whole way, ever since he had left Issenach, in a manner he had never experienced before, nor had it yet left him." After informing him that he understood the mandate of

Charles was published in order to affright him, he adds, with that undaunted courage and nobleness of mind which were the leading features of his character, "Nevertheless, Christ lives, and I shall enter Worms in spite of the gates of hell, and the powers of the air. I am determined to terrify Satan, and to despise him."

As he approached nearer to Worms, his friends became more alarmed for his safety. They viewed him as a victim devoted to destruction, and who would be soon immolated upon the altar of Popish despotism. When he arrived at Oppenheim, he found several letters from his friends, and one from Spalatin himself, urging him not to repair to Worms. It was upon this occasion that he made the celebrated declaration, "That if there were as many devils at Worms as tiles on the houses, I am determined boldly to go thither." He himself many years after expressed surprise at his own conduct, and seems to have supposed, that he received special assistance from God, by which he was enabled to brave such dangers. For a short time before his death, after relating the anecdote to his friends at Aisleben, he added— "Thus God can render a man undaunted; I know not whether I should now be possessed of so much courage."

The emissaries of the Church appear to have laid schemes to delay him on the road, imagining that, if by any means this could be effected, so as that the term allowed him might be expired, his safe-conduct would be forfeited. But Lu-

ther was not to be entangled. Only three of the twenty-one days remained; he therefore constantly replied to those who urged him to meet Glapio, the Emperor's confessor, "That he was determined to go where he was ordered by the Emperor." In the prosecution of this fixed resolution, he prepared himself for his journey, and altering his mode of conveyance, he, in his Friar's cowl, and in an open chariot, made his entry into the city of Worms upon the 16th April. This much more resembled a Roman triumph, than that of a monk repairing to answer for his opinions and conduct, before the greatest prince and most august assembly in Christendom.

Upon the subsequent day official notice was sent to Luther that his presence was required at the diet at four o'clock P. M. So great was the crowd, that it was impracticable to get access by the ordinary road to the palace. Anxious to see the Reformer, they went through gardens, by-ways, &c. They ascended the tops, and tore off the roofs of houses for the same purpose.

The official, to whom the management of the business had been committed, proposed two questions; 1st, Whether Luther acknowledged himself the author of the books which bore his name, and to a collection of which he then pointed; 2d, Whether he was disposed to retract what they contained. He acknowledged himself the author, but asked time to meditate upon the reply he should give to the second

question. He was allowed one day. Luther went at the hour appointed, but had to wait two hours before he got admission. After recapitulating what had taken place, Eckius repeated the second question, to which Luther replied, first in the German, and then in the Latin language. This defence occupied a long time in delivering, and concluded with the avowed declaration, "that unless he should be convinced by the Scripture, he neither would nor could recant." The archbishop of Treves had two meetings with him on the same subject at Worms, but they produced no effect; and on the 26th April, Luther left Worms, having received a safe-conduct for twenty-one days from the Emperor, and was discharged from preaching on the road home. This however he did not obey.

The Reformer was, by the command of the Elector of Saxony, seized on his road to Wittenberg, by a party of men in masks. They used no violence, but they carried him back to the castle of Wartemburg. The whole transaction is involved in obscurity. After Luther's friends, the Elector of Saxony and the Elector Palatine, had left the diet, he was put under the ban of the Empire, that is, declared a heretic and schismatic—all were commanded not to receive or protect him,—a right was given to every one of seizing him and his accomplices, or of taking possession of their property.

He did not remain inactive in this castle. One of the first objects that attracted his attention was the state of the different universities

with which he was more particularly connected. He composed an address to the students of the university of Erfurt: he published also, in the German language, a treatise on auricular confession—also brief notes on the Evangelists—on the celibacy of the clergy, in which he laid it down as incontrovertible, that all men were at liberty to marry.

Towards the end of this year, 1521, he was attacked from a very unexpected quarter. Henry VIII. of England entered the lists with Luther. In early life he had paid some attention to scholastic theology, being originally intended for the Church. From the flattery he had received from his minions, he never doubted of vanquishing Luther. The “*Babylonish Captivity*” had attracted his notice, and he undertook the defence of the seven sacraments. The King was created “*Defender of the faith*” in consequence of this pamphlet, and his successors retain this title to this day. Henry’s book is not destitute of merit, but it is the opinion of many critics, that it was written by Cardinal Wolsey.

Charles now began to act in hostility to the Reformation; and Leo died upon the 2d of December.

CHAPTER V.

UPON the 9th of January, 1522, Adrian VI. was created Pope, a native of Utrecht, who had been entrusted with the education of Charles V.

It was in the retired situation to which Luther had been carried, that he projected, and in part accomplished, what was the most severe blow that the Papacy had ever received, and which contributed more than any other circumstance to the stability of the Reformation. This was the translation of the Scriptures into German. Every Protestant will allow, that he never performed a more useful nor more acceptable service to his countrymen, but was also the most politic measure that he could have devised. It not only lopped the branches, but struck at the root of Papal superstition, and supplied the place of hundreds of missionaries, if he had possessed them, to propagate his opinions. Towards the beginning of this year he had made considerable progress, and at Wartemburg he translated the whole of the New Testament. Matthew's Gospel was published first, then Mark's, and the Epistle to the Romans; the other books soon followed, so that the whole came out in September. The different books were sold separately, at a low price, and printed in a very small size, that the common people might be able to purchase them. A second edition of the New Testament was printed in the course of the same month.

He then proceeded to the Old Testament, and the order in which he took them was, *first*, the five books of Moses; *second*, the historical books; *third*, the Prophets. This was a much more difficult enterprise than the other, not only from the scantiness of the helps to acquire a

thorough knowledge of the Hebrew language in Luther's days, but also from the highly figurative terms in the greater part of it. The whole was published in 1530, and a complete edition with emendations not long after. Its intrinsic merit is its chief recommendation, and enabled it to support that rank which it has universally acquired.

Luther left the castle on 3d March 1522, and gave to the Elector a full exposition of his reasons for doing so. Great expressions of joy were made upon Luther's return to Wittemberg, and his entering upon his functions in the university. The learned and the unlearned equally partook of the general feeling. From many causes he was determined publicly to deliver his sentiments respecting the commotions which had taken place in his absence. This he did in seven short discourses, which contain a full and candid explanation of his sentiments at the time. The agitation of his mind, and the alternate vicissitudes of joy and grief, of confidence and despondence, may be proved from various documents which still remain. At one time we find him expressing himself in language which discovers a heroism, and an undauntedness of mind, which, though it has always excited the general admiration of mankind, has been the portion of few. At another, the danger of his situation seems to have been pungently felt by him; an effect naturally to be expected to have been produced upon any one who had the common feelings of humanity. Thus he wrote to the Elec-

tor: "I am of opinion, that not only the opposition or kindness of your Highness, but even the hatred and fury of the whole world, ought to be a secondary consideration when the present peculiar circumstances of the Church are considered. Your Highness is master of my body and small fortunes, but Christ is the Lord of souls. I am firmly persuaded, that the Gospel preached by me has its origin from God, and by God's grace no kind of death or persecution shall wrest it from me, nor teach me any thing different. I think that I divine rightly, that no terrors nor cruelty can extinguish this light."

During this busy period, Pope Adrian, who had never ceased regretting his elevation to the Pontificate, and casting a wistful eye upon the happiness he enjoyed in a private station, died. This event took place on 14th September, 1523, when the first year of his administration of the affairs of the Church had hardly elapsed. His severe manners, sobriety, honesty, and antipathy to show, had rendered him odious to the Italians, who had been accustomed to the splendour, extravagance, and dissipation of his predecessor Leo.

The Conclave, as usual, could not come to a decision without a violent struggle, yet by art and address, Julius of Medicas was elected Pope in the end of November, and assumed the name of Clement VII. He possessed a very different character from Adrian. He was afraid that the acknowledgment of the existence of

corruptions, even in the Court of Rome itself, would afford ground of confidence to those who desired a reform, and besides, he considered it to be a dangerous precedent to allow, that the Vicar of Christ and his Sanhedrim could in any instance go wrong either in theory or practice.

The diet at Spires engaged much of the attention of the Elector John.

The diet met at Spires on the 15th March, 1529. The proposition against innovations was carried. The princes, therefore, entered a protest against this resolution, and stated in moderate terms the reasons which had induced them to do so. From this memorable transaction, which happened upon 19th of April, the dissentients were denominated *Protestants*, and have entailed that honourable appellation upon those who, since that period, have *protested* against the corruptions of the Church of Rome.

Charles having been solemnly crowned by the Pope, had given the most solemn assurance that no effort should be wanting to extirpate the Protestants in Germany, and that no General Council should be called. The Turkish arms, on the side of Hungary, having excited considerable alarm, a meeting of the Imperial diet at Augsburg was called in 1530, to deliberate on the Turkish war, and on the state of religion in Germany. The Elector of Saxony having received a summons to attend it, was anxious to present to the diet a statement of those articles of faith which Protestants considered of the greatest importance, and which it behooved

them publicly to maintain. Great ignorance prevailed respecting what they really held as truth, and this method was judged to be the most expedient. The Elector requested Luther, Melancthon, Jonas, and Pomeranus, that they would transmit to him at Torgaw, where he then resided, those articles of the Protestant faith which they considered as of the greatest importance. They were not to give any unnecessary offence, and commanded to send them to him before the 21st of the month. This Luther readily accomplished. He comprised the articles of religion under seventeen heads, and delivered them to the Elector of Torgaw, from which circumstance they are generally called "*The Articles of Torgaw.*" Those articles contain the heads of what constituted the *Augsburg Confession*.

The political and ecclesiastical state of Germany now required that the different parties should declare themselves. The Elector John was fully aware that discussions regarding religion would occupy a very considerable portion of the attention of the diet. He therefore determined to carry with him to Augsburg, theologians, by whose advice he might be able to conduct himself, so as to be of greater advantage to the cause, than if he trusted to his own judgment. From political reasons it was thought improper that Luther should enter the city of Augsburg; he was therefore left at Cobourg. He resided in the castle at a convenient distance, where he could be easily consulted

upon any emergency. The Reformer would not only have exposed himself to unnecessary danger in the Imperial city, but his appearance before the Emperor could have been viewed in no other light than as insulting the feebleness of his jurisdiction, setting his authority at defiance, and rendering him more hostile.

The Protestant princes had received such an accession to their courage, that, as they passed through the different cities of Germany, on their way to Augsburg, they caused those ministers who were in their train to preach before them. When they arrived at the diet, they wished to indulge themselves in what they reckoned so great a privilege, and previous to the arrival of the Emperor, actually did so. But by the artifice of the Romish emissaries, Charles was not disposed to grant this toleration. Luther recommended that a petition should be presented, but was decidedly of opinion, that if nothing could be obtained, it was their duty to submit to such unlawful violence. The truth is, that Luther was one of those extraordinary mixed characters; though capable of the greatest violence, he possessed a vein of good sense and practical wisdom which fall to the lot of few.

Whilst Luther resided at Cobourg he had severe attacks of headache, besides other complaints; and so poorly was he, that the Elector of Saxony wrote to him, and sent medicines from his own physician.

At this diet was presented the far-famed Augsburg Confession. The Confession was

composed by Melancthon. It consists of twenty-eight chapters. The doctrines maintained by the Protestants are distinctly enunciated, and the errors of the Church of Rome are pointed out.

A man of Luther's activity of mind could not be idle. Though in indifferent health, he prosecuted his usual studies. He employed his leisure in translating the Prophets, and composed a commentary on the Psalms. Besides those graver employments, he chastised the vices of the clergy, and, as a kind of relaxation, amused himself by attempting a translation of *Æsop's Fables*. His natural playfulness of humour found objects even in solitude, upon which it might exercise itself, for he sometimes took great pleasure in writing humorous letters to his friends. He spent, nevertheless, a long time every day in devotion, and, in short, was so much occupied, that he was dissatisfied with the officious attention of his friends. He was never idle, and whilst the complicated and important transactions at Augsburg excited some uneasiness in his mind, the success of the doctrines he taught appears to have more than counterbalanced it.

The decree of the diet of Augsburg was exceedingly unfavourable to the Lutheran cause. The political state of Europe necessarily induced an ambitious prince, like Charles, to conciliate the Pope. The opposition, however, of the Emperor, though it was not agreeable to the Protestant princes, did not deprive them of that

decision of character which they had already shown in the most remarkable manner. They prudently resolved to deliberate concerning the best method of repelling the open force which they rightly conjectured would be employed against them. For this purpose meetings were held at different times at Smalcalde and Frankfort. They determined to assert their rights, and to resist by force any encroachments that might be attempted to be made upon their religious privileges.

Luther, whose opinion was much respected by the leaders of the Protestant party, took a lively interest in all those transactions. It had been frequently agitated among the favourers of Reformation, whether it was lawful to take arms in its defence. The enemies of Luther did not scruple to ascribe to him seditious sentiments, and represented him as the herald of insurrection, and particularly, that he had exhorted his countrymen to disobey the Imperial authority. He was thus called upon to vindicate himself. This he did in a manner in every respect becoming an honest man, and the character for probity which he had so long maintained. He professed all lawful submission to Charles as a civil ruler, and was ready to obey him in every thing which was consistent with a safe conscience, but farther he could not go. Nay, he boldly avowed, that no authority, howsoever constituted, could require obedience to mandates which were immoral or unjust; and, among these, he reckoned taking

up arms against the true religion and righteousness.

Thus he was the author not only of a reform in matters which related to religion, but also gave the example of a new tone of thinking, and consequently of writing and acting upon political subjects.

A reconciliation took place in the course of this year, between the Elector and George, Duke of Saxony. This event excited the most lively sensations of joy throughout the whole principality. The bells were rung, fires lighted, and, in short, every demonstration of joy was given, which so important an event, as they supposed it, demanded. Upon this occasion the Elector's chancellor received it in charge, to warn Luther to avoid irritating the Duke by the severity of the language which he employed. To this the Reformer made a memorable and independent answer. It was to the following purport: "That although he had many reasons to be dissatisfied with the Duke, he would not wantonly write against him; but that peace and concord might be ratified between the Elector and the Duke, and suffer no interruption, he would pardon all which George had done against him, upon condition that he would not create new causes of uneasiness to him, and should be at liberty to answer his other adversaries." This transaction contains sufficient evidence how much that prince felt by being chastised by Luther, and how high he stood in the estimation of his enemies, when

this was introduced as a stipulation in the agreement of the two princes.

Luther did not publish many works in 1531. This year he also lost his mother, Margaret Lindaman. This event happened upon the 20th of May, and affected him very much. The Reformation was also deprived of those great men, Zwinglius and Cæcolampadius: the former fell in the field of battle upon the 11th of October, when, according to the ancient custom of the inhabitants of Zurich, he, as chief minister, led his countrymen to the field. He was left upon the spot where he fell, and his barbarous enemies treated his dead body with great cruelty and indignity. Those two eminent men were engaged in the same work with the Saxon Reformer. It has been mentioned above, that they differed upon some points, disputed concerning them, and it is not unlikely that some degree of jealousy existed between them. Their death gave occasion to much speculation, and even Luther judged harshly concerning it.

The year 1532 is more barren of incident than the preceding. He published, however, commentaries upon different portions of the Scripture. The most important event which happened, was the death of John, Elector of Saxony. This prince was the steady friend of the Reformation, and of Luther. Under his auspices a new form of religion had been introduced into Saxony. He not only warmly approved in theory the Lutheran doctrine, but

was ready to carry it into practice, and actually entered upon it with a degree of ardour equal to what Luther himself could wish. He was personally attached to the Reformer, which he manifested upon numberless occasions. He soothed his mind when in distress, and requested him not to be too anxious about his wife and children, for he would take care of them as if they had been his own. Luther and Melancthon were called to visit him when confined to bed, but they found him at the very point of death, and he was cut off by apoplexy in their presence, when none of his children nor relations were present, upon the 16th of August, in the 63d year of his age. He was succeeded by his son, John Frederick.

The Reformed, in 1534, were not disinclined to the assembling of a Council. They, on the other hand, were eager that it should be convoked. But they now constituted too formidable a body, either to be looked upon with indifference by their opponents, or not to assert their title to hold a seat in that solemn assembly. The Emperor and princes of Germany, who were attached to the Pontifical chair, began to think that no other method could restore peace and security to the empire; and in consequence of this, repeated applications had been made to the Court of Rome to summon a Council, but were as often resisted. At last, the unsteady and irresolute Clement VII. consented that this long-looked-for convocation should take place. Whether he were actually in earnest or not, is

a matter of considerable uncertainty. Be that as it may, Clement had no opportunity of proving his sincerity or insincerity, for he was cut off by the stroke of death, upon the 25th of September, whilst these negotiations were going forward.

CHAPTER VI.

LUTHER was early in 1537 afflicted with a very severe strangury ; and he himself, as well as his friends, despaired of his life. In a letter to his wife of the 18th of February, he thus expressed himself: "In short, I was at the point of death, and I commended you and our little ones to God our good Master. I had given up all hopes of seeing you again, and had great sympathy for you. I laid my account with the grave ; but so many prayers and tears were poured out to God for my recovery, that in the course of the past night I got relief, and am now considerably revived." During this illness the greatest anxiety was manifested not only by his friends, but by the different princes who favoured the Reformation, that he should recover.

No important information could possibly be communicated by recording minutely the incidents which occurred in the life of Luther for several succeeding years. He published various commentaries upon different parts of the Scripture, as well as several treatises which the circumstances of the times seemed to require. Every event which in the most remote degree

affected the progress of religious knowledge interested him, and he was not indolent in defending what he considered to be truth.

After having been engaged in these useful occupations, and looked up to as the father of the Church called Reformed, by the unsolicited but unanimous acquiescence of all his contemporaries, he began, in 1545, to have more severe fits of illness than he had ever experienced. Upon the 21st of June, we are informed by Pontanus, that for eight days Luther had laboured under an excruciating disease. In addition to this, which of itself was sufficient to debilitate him in a great degree, his attacks of headache became more violent and more frequent, so that the sight of one eye became considerably impaired. He was now in his sixty-second year. Those various complaints even made his friends, as well as himself, augur that his death was not far distant. His enemies rejoiced at his infirmities, and expressed the greatest pleasure, that the man who had begun and established the Reformation upon a firm basis, was likely to be soon removed out of the way. They published accounts of Luther's death and funeral; and had even the malignity to introduce in their narrative, that the common course of nature was interrupted, and that the elements themselves testified their abhorrence of the dead body of the heretic. The Reformer published, at the instance of some of his friends, a short declaration, that the whole account was a lie. This, however, was unnecessary.

Old age and infirmity soon had a most powerful effect upon his mind ; and in the month of July, he left Wittemberg. He went to divers places, and had almost formed the determination never to return.

When this was publicly known at Wittemberg, it produced a great sensation among the inhabitants. They expressed the most sincere regret that the Reformer should desert their city. He had been the chief instrument of accomplishing its prosperity ; and, by his fame as a Professor, the public character he sustained as a Reformer, had attracted great crowds of students to that seminary, from which the citizens derived uncommon advantages. Melancthon tenderly loved him, and was so deeply affected by the intelligence, as to propose also retiring from Wittemberg, and seeking some lurking place. The university also applied to the Elector upon the 1st of August, and in the most earnest manner entreated him to use his influence and authority to prevail upon Luther, whom they called their reverend and dear father, to return. They at the same time promised, that every thing which had given him disgust should be corrected. The Elector wrote to Luther upon the 5th of the same month, in the most kind and affectionate manner, and even was at the trouble to send his own physician, Razenbergius, to whom he requested he might unbosom himself in the most confidential manner. Luther returned to Wittemberg, and though in bad health, and consequently incapable of his

usual degree of exertion, he did not desist from strenuously defending his sentiments.

Though Luther was remarkably poor, yet perhaps no individual ever possessed superior influence among his countrymen. His integrity, and the high character which he had every where acquired, induced many to make application to him for advice and direction. He had indeed declined interfering in secular affairs, and wished to confine himself to the duties of his own peculiar vocation; but sometimes this was impossible. A dispute had for some time existed between the Counts of Mansfield, respecting the brass and silver mines, which were at Aisleben, the town in which Luther was born. He had been prevailed upon to undertake the difficult task of attempting to compose the differences in 1545, and had actually gone thither, but was unsuccessful. When the parties appeared to be more disposed to a reconciliation, notwithstanding his infirm state of health, he was again induced to undertake the same journey. The Counts looked up to him as the great restorer of sound doctrine. The Elector of Saxony, too, had interested himself in the business, and had expressed a wish that Luther would use his influence in bringing matters to an amicable termination. He therefore thought proper to comply. That he was in a very feeble state of body, will appear from the following letter which he wrote to James Praepositus, upon the 17th of January, 1546, and only six days before he set out: "I write to you, though

old, decrepit, inactive, languid, cold, and now only possessed of one eye. I had flattered myself that I should have obtained a reasonable rest when on the brink of the grave, as I now consider myself to be, whereas I am overwhelmed with writing, preaching, and business, as if I had never acted, written, preached, or done any thing."

Razenbergius prescribed that an issue should be opened in the left leg, which afforded him considerable relief, for he was able to walk to church, and to the hall of the university, where he lectured, which he could not do for some time before. When he went to Aisleben, however, he neglected to take what was proper to dress it, and to keep it running; and from the great hurry of business, paid it little or no attention. It was the opinion of his physician that this was what hastened his death. To attempt such a journey, at such a season of the year, (23d January) in so infirm a state of health, was certainly very imprudent. He did not arrive at Aisleben till the 28th, on account of the Issel overflowing its banks; and, indeed, he had considerable difficulty in crossing it. Justus Jonas, with Luther's three sons, John, Martin, and Paul, accompanied him.

The Counts of Mansfield determined to show their illustrious visiter the most distinguished marks of their attention. They received him, accompanied with one hundred and thirteen cavalry, their own sons, and many others who were attached to the evangelical doctrine. Upon

his entering Aisleben, Luther was seized with so extreme debility, that he appeared to be at the point of death. He himself observed, that he had always some such trouble or temptation whenever he engaged in any matter of importance. He recovered, however, partly by being rubbed with a warm linen cloth, to which he had accustomed himself, and partly by means of the medicines he had brought from Wittemberg. He was treated with the greatest hospitality, which, notwithstanding his infirmities, he seemed to enjoy; for he indulged himself in that vein of humour which was so characteristic of him. He also most strictly attended to his customary hours for daily prayer, and preached three or four times. He partook of the Lord's Supper twice within the same short period, and died, after a pleasant and pious conversation with his friends and sons, and many illustrious persons of both sexes. It has been already remarked, that Justus Jonas accompanied Luther to Aisleben. Upon his decease, he thought proper to give intimation instantly to John Frederick, Elector of Saxony, of what had happened. He accordingly wrote to that prince. It was written in a great hurry, but as the facts were fresh in his memory, and, besides, afterwards received the sanction of Luther's sons, as to their fidelity, I have judged it proper to translate it entire, as furnishing a faithful and interesting account of his last moments.

“Most Serene Elector, I present to you my

most humble and ready service. It is with a very sorrowful heart that I communicate the following information to your Highness. Although our venerable father in Christ, Dr. Martin Luther, felt himself unwell before he left Wittemberg, and on his journey to this city, and complained of his weakness when he arrived in this place, he nevertheless was present at dinner and supper every day in which we were engaged in the business of the Counts. He ate and drank tolerably well, and humorously observed, that in his native country they knew well what he ought to eat and drink. His sleep, also, and rest, could not be complained of. His two youngest sons, Martin and Paul, and I, with one or two men-servants, slept in his bed-chamber, and sometimes, also, M. Michael Cœlius, minister at Aisleben.—We put him to bed, after having every night warmed it. On account of his infirmity, he had been accustomed to this. Luther, for the three weeks he remained here, regularly bade us good night, in the following words:—"Pray to God, that the cause of his Church may prosper, for the Council of Trent is vehemently enraged against it." The physician who attended, caused the medicines to which he had accustomed himself at home, to be brought from Wittemberg. His wife also sent some others of her own accord. Even at this time the business of the Counts of Mansfield required to be attended to every other day, or sometimes at the interval of two days; he assisted Wolfgang, Prince Anhalt,

and John Henry Count Schwarzburg, and transacted business for one or two hours. But yesterday, being Wednesday, the 17th February, by the persuasion of Prince Anhalt and Count Schwarzburg, and at our earnest request and recommendation, he remained in his study till mid-day, did no business, and walked through the room in his undress. He sometimes looked out of the window, and prayed so earnestly that we who were present could perceive it. He was always pleasant and cheerful ; he, however, said to Cœlius and me, 'I was born and baptized at Aisleben, what if I should remain or die here.' That same day he did not sup in his study, but in the parlour, and during the time of it expounded various remarkable passages of Scripture. He once or twice said in the course of his conversation, 'If I shall effect concord between the proprietors of my native country, I shall return home, and repose myself in my coffin, and yield my body to be eaten by worms.' Before supper, indeed, he had begun to complain of a great uneasiness at his breast, and had given orders that it should be rubbed with a warm cloth, and when he had found a little ease, he supped in the parlour as has been mentioned. He ate well, and was cheerful. When supper was ended, he again began to complain of an oppression at his breast, and asked for a warm linen cloth. He forbade us to send for medical assistance, and slept on a couch for almost two hours and a half. Cœlius, the landlord, Drachstedius, and his wife,

whom we called in, the town clerk, Luther's two sons, and himself, sat by him, watching him till half after eleven. He then requested that his bed in his own bed-chamber should be warmed, which was done with great care, and he was conducted to it. Myself, his two sons, Ambrosius, whom he brought from Wittemberg, and other servants, lay down in the same bed-chamber ; Cœlius was in the adjoining room. At one o'clock A. M. he awoke Ambrosius and me, and desired him to warm the room, which was done. He then said to me, 'Oh, Jonas, how ill I am ; I feel a very great weight at my breast : I shall certainly die at Aisleben.' I answered, 'Reverend father, God, our Heavenly Father, will assist you, by Christ, whom you have preached.' In the mean time Ambrosius made haste, and conducted him out of bed into the chamber. He went without any assistance, and passing the threshold, said, 'Into thy hands I commit my spirit.' There he began to walk, but in a short time asked for warm linen cloths. We immediately sent for two physicians from the city, who came instantly. We also caused Count Albert to be awakened, who, together with his wife, came to his assistance. The latter brought some cordials and other medicines. But Luther began to pray, saying, 'O my Heavenly Father, eternal and merciful God, thou hast revealed to me thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ ; I have preached him, I have confessed him, I love him, and I worship him as my dearest Saviour and deliverer,

whom the wicked persecute, blame, and blaspheme—receive my soul.' He then three times repeated the words of the psalm, ' Into thy hands I commit my spirit, God of truth, thou hast redeemed me.' Also, ' God hath so loved the world.' Whilst the physicians and we applied the most salutary medicines, he began to be silent and to faint, nor did he answer us, though we called loud to him and shook him. When the Countess again gave him a little cordial, and the physicians insisted that he should answer, in a feeble tone of voice he said to Cœlius and me, yes or no, according as the question required to be answered. When we then cried out, ' dearest father, do you verily confess Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Saviour and Redeemer ?' He then answered, so distinctly as to be heard, ' Yes.' Afterwards, his forehead and face became cold, and although called by name, he returned no answer, but with his hands clasped, gently breathed and groaned ; and thus (which with a very sorrowful heart, and many tears, we lament) he fell asleep between two and three A. M. Count Albert with his wife, and John Henry Count Schwarzburg, arrived early, and were present. Though overwhelmed with grief, being for twenty-five years his scholars, we thought it proper to give the earliest intimation to your Highness of his death, most humbly requesting, that you may be pleased to give us commands respecting his funeral. We shall remain here till we receive them. We pray, also,

that you may write to the Count what he ought to do. He is very willing to retain the body in his native country, but will obey your Highness. May God, our Heavenly and Omnipotent Father, comfort you and us, whom this event hath so much afflicted. We also request that your Highness may write to his wife, Melanchthon, Pomeranus, and Cruciger, because you know better how to do it than we.

“Aisleben, 4 o'clock A. M., Thursday, 18th February, 1546”

Thus died Dr. Martin Luther, in the sixty-third year of his age, in peace and quietness, after as extraordinary a career as ever fell to the lot of man.

As long as virtue and knowledge are cherished in the world, or the records of the past transmitted to future generations, so long shall the Reformer of Wittemberg be numbered among the immortals.

As Luther had been honoured in his lifetime, so the most respectful attention was shown to his remains by all ranks. The Elector, John Frederick, received Jonas' letter upon the same day on which it was written. He immediately wrote to the Counts of Mansfield, “that he was exceedingly affected by Luther's death, and requested that they would permit him to carry away the body, that it might be buried in the church at Wittemberg.” To this they consented. The same Jonas who gave an account of Luther's

death, also related what happened before and at the funeral. This I shall also translate.

“ Next day, being the 19th February, at two o’clock P. M., the corpse was brought with great solemnity, the clergy in the mean time singing, into the church of St. Andrew, the largest at Aisleben. The princes and Counts accompanied it. Among these were Wolfgang, Prince of Anhalt, his brothers, &c., and many other nobility, with a great number of noble ladies, and an immense multitude of common people. Jonas preached the funeral sermon from the 4th chapter of 1 Thessalonians. When he had concluded, the congregation separated, having left the body in the church, under the care of ten citizens, who were to guard it all night. As it had been agreed upon to carry it to Wittemberg, Michael Coelius preached in the morning from Isaiah Ivii. ‘The righteous perisheth,’ &c. After mid-day, all the persons above mentioned, with the same solemnity and pomp, accompanied the dead body from the church through the city, and even without the gate, with great grief. It was carried to *Hall* that night. The husbandmen from all the neighbouring villages, assembled by the ringing of bells, with their wives and children, met it, expressing the most unfeigned grief. About five o’clock, when the company who attended the body came near the city, many citizens and matrons came out to meet them. When they came to the gate of the city, the clergy presented themselves; whom almost all the senators

followed. The schoolmaster, with his scholars, according to custom, sung the funeral song. The streets of the city were so crowded with the multitude, and the chariots of the attendants, but particularly that in which Luther's body was, that they had often to stop. They arrived at the church at half past seven, where a psalm was sung by the whole multitude, which was done with many sighs and tears. A sermon was to have been preached to the people, but on account of the lateness of the hour, the body was immediately deposited in the vestry under a guard. Next Lord's day morning, being the 21st, the funeral began to move about six o'clock. The senate, clergy, and scholars attended it in the same order and with the same ceremonies, without the gate of the city, as they had received it upon the preceding day. When they arrived at Bitterfield, about mid-day, on the confines of the territory of the Elector of Saxony, three persons, among whom was the Prefect of Wittemberg, and who had been sent by him, received the Counts and the rest of the company with forty-five horsemen, who attended the funeral. After dinner they came to Kemberg, and on Monday the 22d they arrived at Wittemberg. When they came to the gate, they found assembled the rector, doctors, masters, with the whole members of the university, the senate, and all the inhabitants of the city. The ministers of the gospel, with the scholars going before, sung hymns all the way to the church. Immediately before the

funeral were the Prefects above mentioned, on horseback, then the Counts of Mansfield with their cavalry; next a four-wheeled carriage, on which was the body of the deceased. His wife Catharine, and daughter, accompanied by other matrons, followed in a lower carriage; then his three sons, John, Paul, and Martin; his brother James from Mansfield; George and Cyriac Hauffman, his sister's sons, and other relations from the same place. Wolfgang, the noble rector of the university, was next in order, and several sons of princes, counts, and barons, who were students at Wittemberg. Then Pontanus, Melancthon, Jonas, Pomeranus, Cruciger, and other elderly persons of the same order,—the other doctors and masters, all the senators, the students, and the whole body of the citizens. Behind followed a very great crowd of married women, matrons, virgins, and children, all of whom bitterly lamented his death, and poured forth lamentations on account of it. It is incredible how great a multitude assembled in the market-place and in all the streets in so short a space. Many affirmed that they had never seen so many in Wittemberg. The body of Luther was placed in the church on the right hand of the pulpit. After several hymns were sung, which were applicable to the occasion, Pomeranus ascended the pulpit, and delivered a most excellent discourse before some thousands. When he concluded, Melancthon delivered a funeral oration, both that he might testify his affection to, and grief for, Luther, and

alleviate the sorrows of the Church. These things being done, certain learned masters, elected for that purpose, put the body into the grave. And thus the body of Martin Luther, that most excellent organ of the Holy Spirit, lies committed to the dust in the castle of Wittenberg. He lies near to the pulpit in which he had delivered so many excellent and holy discourses in the presence of the Dukes and Electors of Saxony, and all the Church. He lies down in weakness, that at the day of the resurrection he may rise in power.

THE END.

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